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EDITORIAL

A NEW P.L.O. IN JORDAN?

Yasir Arafat finally did it. As a result of his convening the Palestine National Council in Amman, Jordan, the ostensibly united Palestine Liberation Organization is, in fact, a house divided. That could be a good thing if it gives the mainstream within the organization greater flexibility to pursue Palestinian interests by diplomacy rather than by the gun.

It is sometimes useful to note the historical parallel between the Palestinian and Zionist national movements. Back in the 1940s, the Zionists also had their hard-liners, notably Menachem Begin, but David Ben-Gurion and other centrist Zionist leaders kept their distance and thus retained international respectability. The difference, of course, is that the P.L.O. hard-liners, who boycotted the Amman conclave, are controlled and protected by Syria.

No dramatic peace overtures were made by the P.L.O.'s newly constituted governing body, but none had been expected. The delegates' first task was to put their house in order, and on this score something significant occurred that might enable Arafat to respond positively if Israel and the United States ever decide to resurrect the Camp David peace process. In the new Palestine National Council, the strength of the independent members—those not affiliated with Al-Fatah or any of the other guerrilla bands—is greatly enhanced. The independents, numbering about eighty, will bring the P.L.O. a greater degree of pluralism than it has had in the past. Another positive development was the broadcast of the proceedings on Jordanian television. Thus, millions of Arabs witnessed the debates, which were often heated and in which Arafat was not spared from criticism. A trend toward increased democracy within the P.L.O. can only help in the search for a peaceful solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

A ONE-SIDED PRESS
Raymond Bonner

ECONOMICGATE
Alexander Cockburn

SHINING PATH IN PERU
Jeanne DeQuine

MICHIGAN PEACENIKS
Jim Schwartz

TERKEL'S 'GOOD WAR'
Carol Brightman

'HOT ART'
Arthur C. Danto

STATE UNDER SIEGE

CHILE'S ROAD TO CRISIS

The following article was filed before the November 27-28 protests in Chile and provides an analysis of the events leading up to them. According to late word from Santiago, the demonstrations were, on the whole, sparse, but the opposition to Gen. Augusto Pinochet remains determined and united. Soldiers in battle dress manned checkpoints throughout the capital, and heavy tanks patrolled the streets.

Because of this show of force, opposition leaders counseled restraint, and most people of Santiago were afraid to challenge the troops. A number of "flash" demonstrations were held, however; bonfires blazed in shantytown streets and candles burned in house windows. When Pinochet traveled to Arica, Chile's northernmost city, on November 26, protesters there forced the cancellation of a rally scheduled in his honor. Nevertheless, the general's massive mobilization in the capital signaled his determination to use whatever means necessary to crush the opposition. If the current level of repression is maintained and harassment raids on poor neighborhoods and arrests of dissidents continue (at last count, 615 people had been placed in internal exile), the situation could become explosive.

CYNTHIA BROWN

To end "terrorism and subversion"—indeed, "precisely to save democracy and liberty," as he put it—Gen. Augusto Pinochet placed Chile under a state of siege on November 6. Pinochet has never governed without some extraordinary measure limiting basic rights; in 1978 a state of emergency replaced the three-month (renewable) state of siege that had been in effect since 1973. The reimposition of the state of siege served

(*Continued on Page 616*)

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LETTERS.

MISREPRESENTING NICARAGUA

New York City

Since my supposed arguments are invoked by Ronald Radosh to give sustenance to his polemic against the Sandinistas ["Exchange," Dec. 1], let me feed the polemic further. In particular, Radosh's support for Arturo José Cruz's Coordinadora coalition is based on some dubious premises.

The Nicaraguan government, in fact, reopened the election registration period four times to accommodate Cruz. Under pressure from European countries and other Latin American states, Cruz eventually reduced his demands to the point where he had only one: a postponement of the elections to make up for the time he had lost through his earlier objections, which were the result of U.S. prodding. What he finally agreed to was essentially the terms accepted by the other opposition parties in July.

It is difficult to see how any Sandinista negotiator—Bayardo Arce or anyone else—could have secured the participation of Cruz for November 4. Cruz was squeezed by the Socialist International and the Contadora group, which wanted him to take part, and the United States, which did everything possible to prevent his participation and sabotage the elections. In the end, it was pressure from the United States on the right wing of Cruz's coalition that won out.

The original demands by the Cruz forces were for political changes (such as a dialogue with the *contras*) that had nothing to do with the elections but signified an attempt to impose the Coordinadora's program before the elections were held. It is hard to imagine how any government could be expected to agree to those demands, especially from a minority party with little hope of prevailing at the polls. Sensing that the whole affair was a pretext for abstention—for which Cruz's backers would blame the Sandinistas—the Europeans and Latin Americans told Cruz to reduce his demands.

At their conference in Rio de Janeiro in October, the S.I. representatives attempted to negotiate a settlement between the Coordinadora and the Sandinistas. By that time, Cruz had only one real demand—postponement of the elections. The Sandinistas were understandably wary, suspecting that if they conceded a later election they only risked a later pullout by Cruz, citing new reasons.

They offered a number of concessions, including extra television time to take account of Cruz's late entry in the campaign. When this effort failed, they agreed to postpone the elections provided Cruz could get the *contras* to agree to a truce for the election period. Cruz said he would comply; however, the next day he withdrew his offer, unable to deliver the guarantees of the Coordinadora's right-wing members in the private sector in Managua.

At that point Sandinista negotiator Arce broke off the talks. S.I. representatives flew to Managua to get the talks started again but ran into the same obstacle as before: The U.S. Embassy and the far right forces in Cruz's coalition simply had no intention of legitimizing the elections.

Radosh's reference to the Sandinistas' tilt "toward the Soviet Union" serves to pose the issues in terms of the state religion of this country: anticommunism, the "third way" and the assumption that the United States has somehow earned the right to decide the form of government for Latin American countries. This may be useful in preparing U.S. liberal opinion for an invasion, but we should realize that if the United States invades there will be no more free elections. What is happening today in Chile will happen in Nicaragua. The only difference will be the magnitude of the violence.

Radosh cites my Op-Ed essay in *The New York Times* of November 2 to support his arguments. Perhaps the best proof that the piece failed to achieve its purpose was that Radosh could find succor in it for his cold-war-liberal fantasies. Mark Cook, I should add, is considerably better qualified than Radosh to offer informed comment on Nicaragua. Like the S.I. representatives who tried to pull the talks out of the fire, Cook seems to understand the basic lessons of what happened in Rio. Radosh's misrepresentations are apparently aimed at keeping Americans from learning those lessons.

George Black
North American Congress on Latin America

THE STRUGGLE IN RUSSIA

Washington

I would like to disagree with a few points raised in Stephen F. Cohen's "Sovieticus" column of November 17 about Mikhail Gorbachev. Far from being obscure, as First Secretary of the Stavropol region from 1970 to 1978, Gorbachev attracted a great deal of attention in Moscow by completing the extension of the Stavropol Canal, a major irrigation project, on time. The "obscurity" that Cohen ascribes to Gorbachev's pre-Moscow years is further overstated by ignoring the fact that his patrons were two powerful party members, Fedor Kulakov, the secretary in charge of agriculture until 1978, who followed the same career path as Gorbachev, and Mikhail Suslov, a leading Politburo member and the party's chief ideologist.

Cohen casts Grigory Romanov as a conservative and a hard-liner. It is likely that Romanov will attempt to line up the support of the antireform lobby and put himself forward as the acceptable alternative to Gorbachev for the position of General Secretary. He is well placed to do this. However, Romanov is on record as a key sponsor of the economic reforms outlined in January. Even if he was chosen to lead the Soviet Union by the hard-liners, he might well turn out to be a keen reformer. He is thought to be on good terms with Gorbachev and was seen talking with him continually during the June 1983 televised session of the Supreme Soviet, while other party members sat obediently listening to the speeches. We must not forget, however, that Romanov's reputation for corruption may hurt his chances.

Since Gorbachev and Romanov are both potential reformers and the main contenders for Chernenko's position, and since reform of the economy is the most pressing issue, it seems that we will see a long-awaited reform program evolve over the next few years.

My feeling is that Gorbachev will succeed Chernenko and Romanov will succeed the ailing Defense Minister, Dimitri Ustinov.

Matthew Hooberman
Institute for Policy Studies

NATIONAL HEROES?

Oberlin, Ohio

I was intrigued by your comparison of Reagan to de Gaulle [editorial, "After the Fall," Nov. 17]. Reagan has always seemed to me to be like Marshal Pétain of Vichy France. Pétain was a grandfatherly character who promised to rebuild national pride, reassert traditional religious and family values, show hostility to foreigners and minorities and rebuild the country after it had been destroyed by incompetent, weak-willed bureaucrats. Sound familiar? . . . *Owen Lamont*

CORRECTION

Harrison E. Salisbury wishes to correct an error he made in his December 1 article, "The Strange Correspondence of Morris Ernst and John Edgar Hoover, 1939-1964." Judith Coplon never jumped bail, nor did she ever flee the country after her conviction for espionage was reversed in the U.S. Court of Appeals.

EDITOR'S NOTE

One of the values of Harrison E. Salisbury's article on Morris Ernst's correspondence with J. Edgar Hoover is that it underscores the importance of the Freedom of Information Act as a means of monitoring U.S. intelligence agencies years after the fact. We particularly regret, therefore, that we did not catch the error about the Judith Coplon case, one which has a historic significance in this regard. No public document prior to the advent of the F.O.I.A. taught us more about the F.B.I.'s shocking shenanigans on the margins of the law than the trial records in that case.

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EDITORIALS.

Economic Jitters

Not the least of President Reagan's many successes has been his ability to influence the timing of events ordinarily beyond mortal control. Recessions, recoveries and other macroeconomic vagaries may or may not respond to fiscal fiddling and monetary fine tuning, but they rarely come and go in a matter of a month, much less a week. Reagan seemed to command his indexes to leap or lower on the hour, and precisely to the point of his political advantage.

But magic has a way of wearing thin, and events can overtake even a master manipulator of time and truth. Some of Reagan's best statistics were suspect as early as last summer (see Alexander Cockburn, page 606). But the generally rosy picture of recovery and boom has faded so fast since November 6 that even manufactured optimism cannot reverse the spreading gloom.

The nomenclature for the approaching crisis comes from economics: growth recession, flat taxes, deficits and deflation. But the problems are primarily political, and they are largely in the Administration's hands. The looming debates on monetary policy, budget cuts and tax reform will be focused within the Republican Party, with the Democrats acting as mischievous kibitzers on the sidelines of the struggle. Many in the President's party fear that the next recession will not only lead to their defeat at the polls two and four years hence but could also reverse the "Reagan Revolution" which has given rise to conservative power and put liberals

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to rout. The faint of heart are eager to return to the conventions of Keynesianism and maintain social programs that affect the voting majority. Stauncher Reaganauts, however, want more of the magic they believe led to the last recovery: the supply-side formula of lower taxes for the rich, higher profits for corporations, widespread cutbacks in social spending and unlimited growth for the military machine.

But the size of the deficit and the level of interest rates make it all but impossible to maintain social programs without significant tax increases, which would exacerbate the slump. And reliance on the notions of 1981-style Reaganomics seems certain to multiply its unfortunate consequences without gaining any benefits.

As many economists, both Republican and Democrat, have been saying all along, the imbalances in the economy are structural and have to do with radical changes in the international order as well as long-term shifts in domestic relationships. For the sake of short-term political gain, Reaganomics has devastated basic industry and manufacturing while encouraging the evanescent service sector; it has sacrificed whole regions of the country to the growth of the resort belt; it is forcing millions of middle-class families into the ranks of the overworked poor; and it is subsidizing a rapacious imperial system at the expense of self-sufficiency in less-developed countries.

For now, Democrats in Congress have the power to veto or ratify important parts of Reagan's response to the crisis he has precipitated, but they are not in a position to redirect policy on a grand scale. The Republicans must wrestle with the results of their own shortsightedness. That should provide some political entertainment for those of us who have found very little of it in the past year. After that, there will be work enough for everyone, picking up the pieces of those policies which are already doomed to fail.

Spirit of Geneva

On Thanksgiving Day, the Reagan Administration announced it would hold "preliminary" arms control negotiations with the Soviet Union in Geneva on January 7 and 8. President Reagan may be unsophisticated about the arcane world of nuclear strategy, but he can decipher the polls. And as a recent *New York Times* editorial pointed out, "The voters' mandate is plain." Americans want "something more than the hostility and diplomatic confusion of the last four years."

Anticipating that verdict, the President said in an election-eve speech that his first priority in a second term would be "peace" and "disarmament." Perhaps the State Department, which christened 1983 the Year of the Missile, will proclaim 1985 the Year of Peace and Disarmament.

However, some remarks by national security adviser Robert C. McFarlane, reputed to be a member of the pro-arms-control faction in the Administration, cause us to think that such an appellation would be premature. On CBS's *Face the Nation* of November 25, McFarlane said:

> It strikes me that what is significant is not so much that there are talks but that the U.S. is entering them with a sense of realism that is born of losses this country suffered from talking in the late 1970s. We learned a lot in those days. We learned that Soviets violate treaties. We learned that they bargain very hard; that compromise is really an alien concept to them. We learned that while talking they moved into countries from Afghanistan to very visible support in Nicaragua and elsewhere.

If that represents the views of those in the White House who *favor* arms control, 1985 will be the Year of Living Dangerously.

Royal Prerogative

Last week the White House explained why the President halted the antitrust investigation into an alleged conspiracy by several trans-Atlantic airlines to force Laker Airlines out of business: "foreign policy reasons." Asked to elaborate, spokesman Mark Sheehan offered a doctrine of sovereign immunity that would have made Louis XIV ("*L'état c'est moi*") blush: "You can't expect the President to explain foreign policy decisions. It is enough for him to consider the factors and decide, for the good of the country."

Even out of the mouths of spokesmen the truth occasionally emerges. With the doctrine of unaccountability now official, we trust that the President will not waste the public's time with answers to questions on foreign policy at press conferences. Instead, he might use a sign reading "Foreign Policy Decision," which would drop down like Groucho Marx's duck on *You Bet Your Life*, cutting off further discussion. It would be an entertaining visual aid, and would save the President the trouble of launching into those rambling flights of fancy that lead him into misstatements. And save the rest of us from having to listen to them.

A One-Sided Press

The Reagan Administration (and conservatives in general) frequently rail against the reporting from Central America, charging that it does not reflect the reality of the situation. The charge is accurate, but the distortions favor the Administration's policies rather than the other way around.

Compare the coverage of the 1982 Salvadoran and the 1984 Nicaraguan elections. The Administration heralded the Salvadoran vote as a giant step forward for democracy and condemned the Nicaraguan polling as a "sham." Although neither was democratic by U.S. standards, neither was a sham. But the reporting reinforced the Administration's characterization in several ways. First, the amount of coverage given each differed. More than 700 journalists poured into El Salvador in 1982: major newspapers dispatched two

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and three reporters; networks fought for space on the roof of the Camino Real Hotel in the capital to film interviews; election stories made the front pages and led off the evening news for days. By contrast, the media provided only minimal coverage of the Nicaraguan elections.

Second, many of the stories about the Nicaraguan contest focused on the parties that were *not* participating. Nearly every article noted—prominently—that Arturo Cruz was not on the ballot. The fact that F.D.R. leader Guillermo Ungo was not permitted to participate in El Salvador was omitted from most stories, or mentioned only toward the end. (Although it was sometimes reported that he "boycotted" the election, confidential documents show that the army would not permit him or other leftist candidates to run.)

The coverage of Nicaragua also stressed that press censorship and a state of emergency which restricted political activities were in effect. Stories about the Salvadoran election rarely, if ever, noted that there is no opposition press in that country, that opposition editors and reporters have been murdered and their plants bombed. Nor did many stories of the Salvadoran elections mention that a state of siege limiting political activity was also in effect there during most of the campaign. (The same situation prevailed during the 1984 elections.)

A major theme in reports on the Salvadoran elections was news of guerrilla attacks aimed at disrupting the voting. In contrast, *contra* raids in Nicaragua were rarely reported, although at least two election officials were killed while registering voters, another was kidnapped and seven soldiers were killed while transporting election-day materials.

The bias is reflected in more than just the election coverage. Since 1980, attacks on the economic infrastructure by Salvadoran insurgents, which have been roundly condemned by the Administration, have been regularly reported. Yet the bombing of fuel depots, sabotage of port facilities, dynamiting of bridges, destruction of farm cooperatives and burning of crops carried out by *contras* have been reported only sporadically.

Although the *contras* have killed civilians—children, schoolteachers, health workers and political leaders—the U.S. newspapers rarely mention such incidents. When Salvadoran guerrillas kill noncombatants, however, it is frequently front-page news. Asked why the *contra* atrocities were not being reported, a U.S. journalist in Nicaragua explained that it was impossible to get to the scene until a day or two later and by then it was stale news. Yet, reports about atrocities committed by Salvadoran guerrillas have appeared weeks and, in some instances, months after the event.

Journalists in Nicaragua have climbed aboard a bandwagon, reporting that the Sandinistas have lost considerable popular support. That happens to be true, but much of the people's dissatisfaction stems from the shortages of basic goods, such as toothpaste, toilet paper, batteries and soap, and the necessity of standing in long lines when they are available. The shortages are attributable, in part, to the government's economic policies and its mismanagement of the economy, which reporters are quick to note. What they frequently overlook is that the shortages are also the direct and intended result of the U.S.-backed war—economic as well as military—against Nicaragua.

Nicaragua under the Sandinistas is not a liberal democracy, and it is possible that someday it will become a communist state, but both the former and current U.S. Ambassadors to that country have said privately that it is not one yet. Nevertheless, reporters routinely label Nicaragua as "communist" or "Marxist-Leninist." Those terms trigger negative responses among readers and oversimplify the complex debate going on within the Sandinista leadership about the future political and economic structure of Nicaragua.

At a recent discussion about press coverage of Central America sponsored by the Media Forum in New York City, panelist George Melloan of *The Wall Street Journal* declared, "I don't have the foggiest idea what Marxism-Leninism is." It was an important admission from a senior editorial writer of a paper whose editorials routinely apply the phrase to the Sandinistas and the Salvadoran guerrillas. As Harrison Salisbury noted recently in a *New York Times Magazine* article on China, it is possible to find "a quotation from Marx or Engels or Lenin to justify just about any policy."

Melloan's and Salisbury's observations suggest that reporters should be extremely careful about the descriptive phrases they use, unless they can define them and are confident that the definition fits those to whom the phrases are applied.

Documenting the double standard in reporting on Central America is easier than understanding why it is so prevalent. One reason is that journalists, like politicians, don't want to be labeled as leftists, or as being "soft on communism." Reporters in Central America don't worry about being attacked by press columnists like Alexander Cockburn in *The Nation* or Geoffrey Stokes in *The Village Voice*. Indeed, such criticism may enhance the reporter's status within his or her organization. And many reporters are familiar with the way that *The New York Times*'s Herbert Matthews was vilified for having reported too sympathetically about Castro in the 1950s. If Nicaragua should go communist, journalists who have written anything favorable about the Sandinistas will be treated harshly. If it does not, who will criticize the journalists who reported so negatively on the revolution?

As I asserted during a recent panel discussion, the bottom line is that the Administration is getting more than a fair shake from the reporting in Central America. A Reagan Administration official who was present agreed. The audience was clearly stunned by his admission. It might not shock journalists in Central America, but it ought to cause them to re-examine their biases and their dispatches.

RAYMOND BONNER

Raymond Bonner, a former New York Times *correspondent in Central America, is the author of* Weakness and Deceit: U.S. Policy and El Salvador *(Times Books). This article is based on remarks he made at a recent Media Forum.*

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BEAT THE DEVIL.

The Liberal Hour

"What is the right and effective way now for Chile—with its history—to fight terrorism? . . . Would not the Chilean government do better to act in a way 1) to isolate the violent 1,000 on the left as the only practitioners of terrorism in Chile and 2) to earn the good faith of the great democratic majority of the country by allowing an open political system to be restored?" This is our old friend the *Washington Post* editorialist trying to think constructively again. Thus far, Pinochet has acted promptly on suggestion number one by herding some opponents of his regime into a football stadium and driving others into exile. No doubt he'll be acting on suggestion number two with all due dispatch.

Watergate: The 1984 Version

Ronald Reagan won the election a month ago because people believed him when he claimed that so far as the economy was concerned, good times were here again. Throughout the campaign Reagan said it, his advertisements said it and the press agreed. But at the very hour of this extraordinary unanimity, the economy came to a halt. No major news organ saw fit to comment, or to challenge the lies coming out of the White House and the Commerce Department. It is, of course, possible that no major news organ even noticed anything was amiss. In any event, the failure of the U.S. press to report on the true state of the economy in the second half of 1984 must rate as one of the great journalistic lapses of the last twenty years.

In the wake of November 6 the national press, working in close cooperation with the White House, has been rearranging the postelection scenery with a speed that is, even by the traditional low standards, indecently comical. Now at last, within a month of the Reagan landslide, the word "recession" is beginning to appear in editorial columns, impatiently shouldering aside all the verbal stage props of Election '84—"boom," "recovery" and the like.

The last important economic data released before the election by a government running on the "good times" plank came on October 19, the Commerce Department's statistics showing that the G.N.P. had expanded at an annualized rate of 2.7 percent in the third quarter. Headline writers and the serious men in suits who do business commentaries on the network news all talked about slightly "slower than expected growth" and then quoted Commerce Secretary Malcolm Baldrige as saying that the slowdown "is already behind us" and that economic growth would rebound to 4 percent in the final quarter.

The truth was plain to see, even in those October 19 figures: the economy was flat between the second and third quarters, except for a growth in manufacturing and retail inventories, itself an indication that the economy was in trouble. But not a single headline that I came across in the two weeks before the election suggested that the "Reagan boom" was over and that given the likely onset of recession, any talk of deficit reduction was (and is) preposterous. One has to argue either conspiracy or trance, or both. It's as though all the commentators were hypnotized by Reagan's campaign ads.

The headline of the *New York Times* Business section for November 1 announced "Leading Indicators Up by 0.4%," thus faithfully following the Commerce Department's index of such indicators for September. You had to read deep into Peter T. Kilborn's somewhat suggestive story to find that, using this same set of criteria, August had originally been called a growth month, before finally being registered as exactly the opposite.

If the department had announced a month earlier that the leading indicators had declined in August, that would have been the third straight month of such declines, prominent evidence that the "recovery" was over. But the revision was an inconspicuous and belated affair, so no one was forced to face the truth—not that Mondale, blathering about the deficit and promising to raise taxes, was inclined to face anything that might have enhanced his chances.

Now, after the election, all is changed utterly, for the worse. On November 20 the Commerce Department revised its 2.7 percent growth rate for the third quarter down to 1.9 percent. The "final sales" figure in the G.N.P. was below that of the second quarter, rather than the same, as the department initially reported. Whereas the department announced a week before the election that sales of new homes had jumped 21.9 percent in September, it announced on November 20 that housing starts in October fell 9.8 percent.

What all this adds up to is outright deception of the electorate, without a murmur of protest from anyone. Either the Commerce Department fixes the numbers, or fine tunes them to the optimistic end of the spectrum, or the numbers are worthless, in which case the newspapers should always make sure to point this out.

Even now most of the domestic reporting on the state of the economy is pretty restrained. There is chaste talk of a "growth recession." The foreign financial press is rather more outspoken. In an editorial on Saturday, November 24, menacingly titled "Haunted by Hoover," the London *Financial Times* said that the ghost of Herbert Hoover was rattling its chains and that "it has suddenly become apparent that the recovery which swept Mr. Reagan back into office actually petered out as long ago as July." It went on to dispute, carefully, the analogy to 1929, before concluding:

> Finally, there is a much more hopeful contrast with both 1929 and 1982. In 1929 all the market economies in the world crashed together: 1982 started vigorous growth in the US itself, but not in the rest of the world.
>
> Is it possible, then, that we are no longer all in the same boat, but rather on a seesaw, so that as US growth declines, growth elsewhere will tend to go up?

That reflection, comforting to the Europeans or the Japanese, will hardly cause much joy this side of the Atlantic. I don't even think it's true. The United States prospered after 1982 because of Reagan's defense spending boosts, which no other country matched or will match in the near future.

Some columnists are beginning to catch on. William

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ALEXANDER COCKBURN

Safire reflected tremulously on November 26 that a recession would annul all bets on a Republican realignment. Right now the Democrats and their house columnists are too stupid to do anything but explode in a tumult of I-told-you-so's, even though they did nothing of the sort and have no idea what to do next, beyond despicably supporting some kind of flat tax, which would be regressive and solve nothing. The only major group that has a clearly stated strategy for dealing with the coming crisis is the Kemp faction on the Republican right. But by an irony it stands as the prime supply-siding scapegoat in the minds of the conventional press now that the recession has finally come to roost on the front pages, where it should have been before November 6. Now is the chance for a growth-oriented Rainbow Coalition to beat the supply-siders at their own game.

You Just Mugged My Heart

The new Jarvik heart pack is only nine inches square and weighs eleven pounds. The heart is worn on the shoulder, in the manner of a camera bag or ghetto blaster. This is a giant step forward in the commodification of the human body, whereby the corporeal infrastructure becomes a hatstand for corporate merchandise in the form of various life-extending or life-enhancing impedimenta.

It won't be long before the discount stores will be carrying hearts of varying price and quality, from the Sony Hart-Pak, with detachable ventricles, to the cheapc South Korean Eezi-Thump. In the case of malfunction, return device with guarantee to your nearest authorized dealer.

We can see now that the big ghetto blasters, carried mostly by blacks and Hispanics, and the tiny Walkmans, carried mostly by whites, were cultural prophecies of the portable heart, alternatively booming or whispering their life-asserting beat. Somewhat along the same lines, the gigantic technological breakthrough represented by the new stand-up toothpaste dispenser was harbinger of Reagan's America, newly erect.

There on the washbasin is no longer the squeezed-out tube of toothpaste, abject and shrunken, but a puissant dildo, some seven inches tall. When the pump tip is pressed firmly, the paste oozes slowly from its nozzle. The tube remains erect and ample, no matter how often it is used. I don't know how feminists feel about having to grab hold of a dildo every time they clean their teeth, but the plain fact is that the new road to gum pride in Reagan's America comes by way of the simulacrum of a male Caucasian sexual member, or—if you want to be overdetermined about it—of a nuclear missile.

It turns out that the new device was launched on its test-market career around the time of the invasion of Grenada, just when America was learning to stand tall again. It went into national markets in May. Sold here under the brand name Check Up, the pump dispenser began to be imported by Minnetonka Inc. in cooperative agreement with Henkel of West Germany just about the time that the Pershing 2s were heading the other way. Henkel put out its pump-dispensed product, Thera-med, about ten years ago, when West German missile frenzy was beginning to gather force, culminating in Chancellor Helmut Schmidt's request for the new NATO missiles.

Larry Wilhelm of Minnetonka tells me that the non-aerosol technology was a "difficult problem" demanding "precision tolerances" of the utmost refinement. In the United States the pump dispenser is extremely popular. Colgate was soon in the fray with its version, exhibiting a bit more throw weight than Check Up (it stands taller) but without the latter's saucy label, "Adult Tooth Gel." Lever Brothers has its Aim rival; Crest is testing one, in cooperation with Procter & Gamble. These are the true technological triumphs of the Reagan years.

Now You See It . . .

§ On October 30, Leonard S. Spector held a press conference at the Carnegie Endowment in Washington to publicize his book *Nuclear Proliferation Today*. As picked up by *The Boston Globe*, the *Los Angeles Times* story was headed "Israel may have 20 nuclear arms, report says." *The New York Times*'s story, by Richard Halloran, was headed "2 Nuclear Arms Races in Third World Feared." Halloran discussed potential arms races between Brazil and Argentina, as well as between India and Pakistan. He never mentioned Israel's nuclear arsenal, as described by Spector.

§ People wanting to get a reasonable picture of the Sharon/*Time* libel trial would be well advised to turn to sources beyond Arnold H. Lubasch's accounts in *The New York Times*. Such interesting matters as (a) the judge's public remark to Sharon and his lawyer, Milton Gould, that "I begin to see now in this case that I can't trust you"; and (b) Gould's public admission that he couldn't sustain his client's position refusing to answer certain questions about Elie Hobeika, intelligence chief of the Phalangist militia, have escaped Lubasch's admiring prose about Sharon.

§ "In an interview last week, Dr [Clemente] Guido [leader of the Democratic Conservative Party of Nicaragua] charged the US embassy with sending an official to visit one of the party's leaders recently with offers of thousands of dollars for the party if it abstained [from the elections]." This appeared in the London *Guardian* for October 30. A similar quote from Guido was printed in *The Providence Bulletin*, as reported by Randolph Harrison of *The Orlando Sentinel*. Stephen Kinzer of *The Times* seems to have been too busy glorifying Archbishop Obando y Bravo to report Guido's interesting remarks.

Want to put your body where your heart is? Nicaraguan students who would otherwise be picking the coffee and cotton crops are on standby for a U.S. invasion. Volunteers from around the world are forming brigades to help bring in the crops. For information, contact Nicaragua Exchange, 239 Centre Street, New York, N.Y. 10013, (212) 219-8620.

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DISPATCHES.

■ IRAN: Khomeini's Nuclear Program

Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini has made one strategic decision the late Shah would have applauded. He has resurrected the monarch's scheme to build a nuclear reactor and possibly produce an atomic bomb.

After the revolution, the Shah's ambitious nuclear energy program was in ruins. But by 1982, Speaker of the Majlis Hasheimi Rafsanjani was declaring that Iran must achieve "technical independence." Soon thereafter, the parliament passed a law restoring confiscated property to nuclear scientists who had returned from exile.

Late last year the Iranian Atomic Energy Organization and the West German Kraftwerk Union, a large engineering firm, agreed to study the feasibility of completing at least one of two reactors which had been under construction before the revolution. Forty West German engineers arrived in May at Bushehr in southern Iran. Kraftwerk maintains construction will not resume, however, until after the war with Iraq has ended.

Naturally, formidable obstacles remain before Iran can recoup its prerevolutionary momentum in the nuclear field. A report published in September by the U.S. Congressional Office of Technology Assessment (O.T.A.) concludes, "[Because] a revised Iranian nuclear program would have to start off with only a fraction of the prerevolutionary technical base," Iran will be incapable of acquiring a nuclear device on its own for the remainder of the decade.

Despite the delays, evidence that the Iranians are committed to acquiring a nuclear bomb keeps popping up. In January, Khomeini reportedly sent a group of Iranian physicists to Europe. In an interview published six months later in *Le Figaro*, the Israeli Ambassador to France, Ovadia Soffer, made a veiled warning: "I am convinced that Khomeini is trying to obtain the means of constructing his own atomic bomb. . . . We have already saved the West from catastrophe by destroying the Osirak nuclear reactor at Tamouz, Iraq."

How the Iranians might pursue a shortcut to getting the bomb is hinted at in the O.T.A. report. It notes that "nuclear proliferation in the Middle East is likely to increase during the next decade because new supplier states, such as Argentina, Brazil, and India, that are not parties to the Nonproliferation Treaty may be willing to sell sensitive facilities." In addition, Iran may seek nuclear material on the black market. By some accounts that is how Israel obtained its bomb. In June, Judge Carlo Palermo of Italy released a report alleging that a group of international arms traffickers have provided Iran with bomb-grade uranium and plutonium.

■ INTELLIGENCE: Whose Man in Teheran?

This is the story of a double agent with three—perhaps four—masters. We can identify him only by his Central Intelligence Agency code name, SDTramp. His convoluted tale is just one of the odd stories contained in shredded C.I.A. documents reconstructed by the students who captured the U.S. Embassy in Teheran.

According to the documents, SDTramp, an Iranian Jew, was a magazine publisher and a former official in the Ministry of Information. Before the revolution he worked for Soviet military intelligence (G.R.U.), "as a source of information on Iranian internal affairs." His "handler" was a Tass correspondent named Nikolan Ivanovich Korol, who worked for the G.R.U.

On April 27, 1979, the C.I.A.'s Teheran station reported, Korol arrived in the city and met with SDTramp, asking him to "gather information on 'Israeli policies' and to 'contact friends.'" Korol, of course, did not know that his old agent was by then working in postrevolutionary Iran as a "unilateral asset" for the C.I.A. and that he would report the details of their meeting to his American control. The Shah's secret police, SAVAK, apparently knew of his contacts with Soviet intelligence, yet the captured cables show that the C.I.A. was not sure that the Iranian was not working for others as well. They note that the spy told his C.I.A. handlers that while he never worked for an Israeli service, he did have "a fairly close relationship with a Soloman Dyan, whom subject felt could possibly be an Israeli intell[igence] officer." Moreover, SDTramp was also approached by another Soviet G.R.U. agent, code-named "PDPI" by the C.I.A., who "directed" him to go to Israel and gather more information. (After some debate, the C.I.A. allowed SDTramp to keep a "large sum of money given him by the Soviets.")

At that point, C.I.A. headquarters ordered the Teheran station to identify SDTramp to Israeli intelligence as a "unilateral agent, give them all the facts and offer to share him." A follow-up cable continued:

> Despite loss of much of our OP [operations] capability against targets such as those described above that would be of interest to Israeli liaison, and despite the latter's own loss of an Iranian operational base with the flight of the large Jewish community there, we are interested in learning more about this apparent RIS [Russian intelligence services] MO [*modus operandi*] for operating against Israel.

In April 1979 SDTramp received a bonus of 120,000 rials, about $1,700. The C.I.A. station reported, "He was most appreciative." And well he should have been, as a Jewish spy working in Khomeini's Islamic Republic. One wonders what happened to this double agent—and where his ultimate loyalty lay.

■ INDONESIA: Suharto's Death Squads

Death squads of soldiers have killed an estimated 3,000 to 5,000 people in Indonesia since 1982—the exact figure is difficult to verify. The squads were formed that year by the military government of President Suharto to wage a war on hardened criminals. For a time no attempt was made to conceal their official status, and the controlled press even published daily kill totals. All the victims had criminal records, and the police cited the decline in the number of violent crimes as an indication that the death squads were a success.

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KAI BIRD AND MAX HOLLAND

But in June 1983, under pressure from Dutch diplomats, the government banned all references in the press to the military link with death squad activity. Thereafter the killings were described as the work of "mysterious" groups or rival street gangs.

Now there is evidence that the death squads may have expanded their targets to include political dissidents. A year ago, Mochtar Sukidi, a journalist with the weekly *Inti Jaya* who was investigating police bribe-taking, was kidnapped outside a police station in central Java. He has not been heard from since. About the same time, the editors of East Java's *Suara Indonesia* received a gruesome package: a severed head wrapped in a plastic bag. Peter Rohi, the newspaper's investigative reporter who had been writing about land frauds, went into hiding.

Last summer a popular student leader at a technical institute in Jakarta was gunned down by what appeared to be one of the death squads. No one has been arrested for the shooting. The press is not allowed to report these murders, and the government keeps the lid on tight. Last year, three major weekly papers were shut down—one of them for running a series of articles titled "Indonesia's One Hundred Billionaires."

■ EUROPE: A Hard Rain Falls

Every third tree in West Germany's forests is damaged. About 18,000 Swedish lakes have become virtual acid pools. In Poland, two-thirds of the rivers are so polluted the water is not fit even for industrial use without purification.

In Europe, concern about the damage wrought by industrial pollution is gradually gaining the degree of urgency that it attained in the United States two decades ago. Still, it is by no means Pan-European. In Belgium and France, where there is considerable forest death, pollution is not a current topic of discussion, and the stream of West German studies on the matter are often characterized as typical "Teutonic exaggerations" by less concerned countries.

Representatives of eighteen countries from Eastern and Western Europe met in Munich this summer to discuss the hefty environmental bill that is beginning to come due. Plenty of evidence was offered that pollutants do not respect national boundaries. A Norwegian study of 4,800 lakes found that all the fish had died in more than 1,000 of them, and that 90 percent of the pollution that produced the acid rain that killed those fish originated outside Norway. Most of it comes from Britain, whose factories spew tons of contaminants every day. That country has hardly any acid rain because prevailing winds carry the smoke away from British shores.

The statistics from Eastern bloc countries are equally sobering, but perhaps none are as grim as those from Czechoslovakia. The forests in the huge Erzgebirge mountain range are rapidly dying. An area of about 247,000 acres lies bare, the vegetation killed by contaminants produced by Czech power plants to the south. Czechoslovakia depends heavily for energy on brown coal, which has six times the sulfur content of the coal used in most power plants. That, coupled with the obsolete equipment used in many local power plants, means that Czechoslovakia discharges the same quantity of pollutants into the air as West Germany does, although it has only one-fourth the population.

The leader of the West German delegation in Munich, Carl-Dieter Spranger, expressed the sentiments of a majority of the delegates when he said, "For the sake of our citizens, we cannot tolerate any further postponement of the environmental problem." But even as he spoke, the head of West Germany's Federal Environmental Bureau was telling a press conference in another city that during his agency's ten years of existence, industry's chief response to the pollution threat had been "*Abwehrsolidarität.*" English translation: "stonewalling."

■ PORTUGAL: Otelo's Last Hurrah?

Lieut. Col. Otelo de Carvalho was the chief strategist for the April 25, 1975, "carnation revolution," which toppled the dictatorial government that had ruled Portugal for more than forty years. Now he sits in prison, awaiting trial on charges of conspiring with the Popular Forces of 25th April (F.P.-25), a terrorist organization. Otelo was arrested last June with forty-one other suspects and held incommunicado for twenty days before formal charges were brought against him.

No date has been set for trial; nor has the government disclosed the nature of the evidence against Otelo. Carlos Picioto, director of the Judiciary Police, will only say, "All the people arrested currently have ties with the F.P.-25." The terrorist organization has claimed responsibility for a rash of bombings and machine-gun attacks directed at large landowners chiefly in southern Portugal. (Despite the arrests, more attacks took place in September.)

The charges against Otelo have been greeted with widespread skepticism. The architect of the revolution is still regarded warmly in many political circles, even though his 1980 bid for the presidency captured less than 8 percent of the vote. Writing in the Lisbon paper *O Diabo*, commentator José Miguel Judice argued that only the Portuguese Communist Party (P.C.P.) would benefit from Otelo's arrest.

It would be logical for the ultra-orthodox P.C.P. to help get rid of an independent radical like Otelo, for his romantic appeal to the left has drawn off much of the party's natural constituency. Some papers have alleged that the P.C.P. provided leads to the police that made the arrests possible.

Miguel concluded:

> If Otelo is found guilty of involvement with F.P.-25, his capacity for political intervention is gone for good. [But] if Otelo cannot be so charged, the opprobrium for his then unjust and precipitous arrest will be turned on the government, especially by members of the Socialist electorate who are still moved by the old Otelo charisma.

Several dozen army officers have offered to testify in Otelo's behalf.

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ARTICLES.

PERU'S ENIGMATIC KILLERS

The Challenge of Shining Path

JEANNE DEQUINE

When he went to sleep on August 10, young Manuel Cuba had no inkling that a massacre would take place in his Andean village that night. The boy was awakened by screams. Several hooded men were breaking down doors and forcing the sleepy inhabitants, including Manuel, to line up in the plaza. The men called the peasants "miserable dogs" and accused them of being police informants. Then the killing began. Some people's heads were sawed off. Other peasants were hacked to death with axes, their eyes and noses gouged out.

"They began to slaughter us with knives, like when we kill sheep," Manuel later recounted from a hospital bed, where he was treated for a hatchet cut in the neck and a bullet wound in the jugular vein. "I pretended I was dead."

Manuel was lucky. More than two dozen neighbors, including three of his relatives, did not survive.

Using simple weapons such as knives, dynamite and slingshots, bands of Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path) guerrillas have slaughtered thousands of Peruvians—government officials, peasants, police. They have transformed Peru into a land of fear and suspicion, threatening the country's recently restored and still fragile democracy. Moreover, their terrorism has provoked military countermeasures which may, in the long run, pose a greater danger than the guerrillas. Peru's armed forces, which have been ordered by President Fernando Belaúnde Terry to eradicate terrorism, have been accused of murdering civilians in a desperate effort to root out the elusive guerrillas.

Compared with other Latin American guerrilla groups, Sendero Luminoso's objectives are enigmatic. Its members follow the teachings of Marx, Lenin and Mao but contemptuously dismiss the Chinese and Soviet systems as watered-down versions of communism. They reserve their fiercest hatred for Peru's indigenous left.

In 1964, Peru's Communist Party split into pro-Soviet and pro-Chinese factions. A year later, Sendero's reputed leader, Abimael Guzmán, founded a group known as the Red Flag. The name was later changed to Shining Path of José Carlos Mariátegui. (Mariátegui, a writer, argued that Peru should not lose its Indian roots in the rush to achieve a Latin American identity.) Sendero emerged in its present form in 1980, shortly after the election of President Belaúnde Terry, the first civilian leader in twelve years. At first, its tactics were puzzling. Butchered dogs tagged with names of Chinese leaders were found hung from lampposts in Ayacucho, a poor southern province that is considered the center of the rebel movement. Gradually, people figured out the symbolism: the dead animals represented modern Chinese politicians, whom Sendero has branded "running dogs of revisionism."

But the guerrillas weren't satisfied with symbolism. Soon they began slaughtering peasants and strewing hacked-up corpses along mountain roads. Most of the victims were apolitical, but during the last year, the rebels have attacked members of Peru's Civil Guard, soldiers and local officials. (All told, between 3,000 and 6,000 deaths have been attributed to terrorist attacks and military action.) On July 24, Saúl Muñoz, Mayor of Huancayo, a southern city in the Andes, was machine-gunned to death while taking his customary early-morning run in a eucalyptus forest outside the city. He was Huancayo's third mayor to be struck by terrorists and the second to be killed.

Sendero's atrocities have become grist for Peruvian dailies, which routinely proclaim the number of deaths in bold headlines such as "They Killed 26 Peasants." Everyone knows who "they" are.

Abimael Guzmán, 49, is a beefy, brilliant former philosophy professor from San Cristóbal National University at Huamanga in Ayacucho. A studious-looking revolutionary with a taste for American novels and classical music, Guzmán wrote his dissertation in 1961 on the esoteric topic of Kant's theory of space. For several years he had been distilling the thoughts of Marx, Lenin and Mao, who are known in Peru as the "Three Swords of Marxism." Now Guzmán is called the fourth sword. He is said to have learned Quechua, an Indian tongue, in the belief that revolutionaries should merge with the culture of peasants, who will ultimately stage the revolution. Guzmán married one of his former students and has reportedly chosen to forgo parenthood so that he can proselytize full time. Among Spanish-speaking urban Peruvians, he is known as Comrade Gonzolo, but in Ayacucho he is called Puka-Inti, Quechua for "Red Sun." Guzmán reportedly recruited many of his followers at the university, whose students come from one of the country's poorest provinces and have little hope of getting a job after graduation.

For all its notoriety, Sendero is highly secretive. Visiting journalists accustomed to lengthy meetings with other Latin American guerrilla groups find that the rebels want no contact with the press. When Peru's Attorney General suggested negotiating with the terrorists last year, they gave no response.

Earlier this year, Belaúnde Terry decided to turn over the antiguerrilla campaign to the armed forces. Having been deposed in a military coup in 1968 during a previous term as President, Belaúnde Terry was reluctant to take the step, but he finally gave in to widespread demands for action. After the military entered the fight, hundreds of people were reported missing, and it appeared that Sendero was not to

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blame in many cases. Families reported witnessing the abduction of loved ones by soldiers hours or days before their bodies were found. Critics of the government charge that Peru is following the example set by Argentina during its "dirty war," when disappearances became commonplace.

"We believe that there have been cases in which the government has attributed responsibility [for murders] to Sendero Luminoso when in fact it was the government that was responsible," Rona Weitz, Amnesty International's U.S. coordinator for Latin America, said recently. Last year the organization appealed to Belaúnde Terry to investigate several alleged murders. One of the supposed victims was later discovered to be alive, however, and after criticizing Amnesty for inaccurate research, the President shelved the inquiry.

Another human rights organization, Americas Watch, has suggested that Belaúnde Terry form a national commission on human rights. "Peru has very poorly trained police forces which are traditionally corrupt and brutal. They have been further corrupted by narcotics traffic," charged Aryeh Neier, the group's executive director. "Sendero Luminoso is perhaps the most brutal and vicious guerrilla group that has ever appeared in the Western Hemisphere, but Peru has the worst possible institutions to deal with it. . . . Under these circumstances, turning it over to the military is a recipe for disaster."

The military's role also troubles Enrique Zileri, publisher of *Caretas*, a popular Lima weekly magazine, who fears the army may be acting indiscriminately. "The problem is in distinguishing friend from foe in the rural areas," Zileri said, pointing out that Senderistas are largely indistinguishable from other youths. "The strategy is to poke the bull without breaking the china."

Peruvian officials, though reluctant to divert dwindling public funds to the country's internal war, reportedly have sent a delegation to the Soviet Union to discuss a $50 million arms purchase. They also want more assistance from the United States, which increased military aid this year from $4 million to $10 million. While State Department officials deny that Peru's internal struggles were a factor in the increase, they say that Sendero Luminoso threatens a key U.S. program in the country: a five-year $34 million drive to eradicate cocaine trafficking in the verdant jungle highlands of the upper Huallaga Valley. "One thing traffickers and Sendero Luminoso have in common is the spread of violence," a State Department spokesman for the project said. Because it fears guerrilla attacks, a 300-member police unit, trained and equipped by the United States, has been hampered in its attempts to apprehend dealers who transport coca leaves to Colombia processing plants in twin-engine planes capable of landing on jungle airstrips. Peruvian officials fear that U.S. aid will be cut off if they are accused of using funds from the antidrug program to fight terrorists.

On November 19 the program was temporarily suspended after fifty submachine-gun-wielding men murdered nineteen Peruvian employees of the U.S.-financed Cocaine Reduction Organization. Belaúnde Terry called the killers "narco-terrorists." No one can confirm that Sendero is working actively with drug traffickers, but the Peruvian government has consistently maintained that an alliance exists. If that is true it places the anticoca program in a delicate position. Congress provided funding to eradicate cocaine, not to involve the United States in Peru's internal insurgencies. State Department officials appear anxious to avoid Congressional charges that the aid is being misused.

Belaúnde Terry's bold military action against the guerrillas has been applauded by many Peruvians, but it has also aroused the country's numerous leftist groups, who worry that the government will clamp down on legal political expression. Peru has a leftist tradition that goes back to the 1920s and is powerful today. APRA (Popular Revolutionary American Alliance), the leading left-of-center party, which is currently predicted to win the 1985 presidential election, was founded in that decade by Raúl Haya de la Torre. The Peruvian Communist Party was also founded in the 1920s, by José Carlos Mariátegui, who, despite his idolization by Sendero, continues to be revered as a national figure. His book *Seven Essays on Attaining the Peruvian Reality* is required reading in the schools. Lima's new Mayor, Alfonso Barrantes, a Marxist, belongs to the United Left, a coalition of communist, socialist and liberal groups, as did Muñoz, the slain Mayor of Huancayo.

Although the enmity between Sendero and the United Left may seem curious, it derives from the former's unique *modus operandi*. Sendero emphasizes destruction and seems to have no interest in achieving the United Left's goals: radical redistribution of the country's wealth to the peasants and the urban poor living in the straw-walled, roofless

DRAWINGS BY SETH TOBOCMAN

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slums euphemistically called *pueblos jovenes*, or "young cities."

"The problem with Sendero," observed one leftist concerned because the guerrillas have not said what they would do after taking power, "is that it appears to be radical in its method but not in its government."

"It's intimidation and nothing else, to knock the country off balance. They want to eliminate capitalism," said APRA member C. Panizo.

While prospects of a Sendero takeover appear remote at this time, no one denies that its tactics, which became more aggressive in early summer, have been effective. "Sendero Luminoso had subsided, but it has come back with enough strength to force a change in the government's relationship with the military," said Enrique Zileri, who was forced to flee the country during the last period of military rule. Cover photographs displayed on his office walls bear witness to Sendero's impact. Those from decades ago depict beauty queens and newlyweds. The recent ones frequently feature corpses—casualties of Sendero's war on its own country.

Sendero has also had a disruptive impact on the nation's vulnerable economy. Belaúnde Terry estimated that by the end of the summer the terrorists had inflicted damage totaling $250 million, blowing up power plants, bridges, railroad stations, schools, police barracks and other facilities. By dynamiting a hydroelectric tower earlier this year, Sendero deprived Lima households and industries of electricity for three days.

The violence has frightened away tourists, and the loss of their trade has hurt large hotels and small shops alike. Last year a tiny souvenir shop near Lima's anthropological museum displayed an impressive inventory of elaborate weavings, sculpted Nativity scenes and terra-cotta statues. Today the shop's selection is skimpy, reflecting the belief of business people that things will get worse before they get better. In the summer the President called on the nation's political parties to unite against the terrorist threat, labeling it "an international conspiracy to discredit Peru and stop the tourist flow, which brings very important economic resources for development."

Belaúnde Terry has succeeded in rallying the country around his effort to contain the insurgents, but he has yet to establish a link between the guerrillas and outside forces. Many Peruvians view Sendero's antipathy toward established communist countries as a good indication that it has no foreign backing, and U.S. State Department officials are relatively unconcerned that Peru's exotic brand of terrorism will be exported beyond its borders. "These people are a ragtag movement with no outside weapons supply. Ninety percent of the attacks are done with dynamite," explained Zileri.

Why, then, has Sendero been so difficult to contain? One answer is that Peru's police and military forces are relatively inexperienced in combating internal political violence. Also, Sendero's strategy, borrowed from Mao's writings on guerrilla warfare, has been effective. The guerrillas' favorite tactic is to swoop down on groups of soldiers, then flee into the

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brush. Many Peruvian soldiers hail from the cities and are unaccustomed to the cold weather and rugged terrain of the guerrillas' mountain hideaways.

Sendero has still another advantage. Police and soldiers, aware they are primary targets, are afraid. One soldier, Eduardo Ordoñez, was murdered while standing Sunday evening guard duty in Lima. He was one of twenty-six policemen and soldiers reportedly felled by terrorists during a two-week period this summer. Some were shot while on duty, others were killed by bombs hurled into police headquarters.

Attempts by the police to infiltrate the group have met with little success. Traitors are rare because of the ruthless way former comrades deal with those who are caught. Some have ended up as corpses heaved into public plazas, the hammer and sickle insignia carved into their flesh.

A female high-school student who witnessed a band of Sendero youths holding a "peoples' trial" of a peer suspected of giving names to police offered this account to a Lima reporter. They stood the boy in a plaza, calling him a traitor and a coward, the girl said:

> Then in front of everyone they cut his head off with a knife. . . . There was nothing we could do to save him. Five minutes later one of them yelled, "Whoever does the same thing will receive the same punishment!" Then they left after making us shout allegiances to Comrade Gonzolo.

Still, some alleged members have been apprehended. Earlier this year police arrested Antonio Díaz Martínez, a small, gray-haired professor of agriculture at the university where Guzmán taught. Díaz Martínez, who once visited China to study agrarian reform, has been influenced by the teachings of Mao and has written about the effect of technological change on the peasants' traditional ways. In a 1969 book titled *Ayacucho: Hambre y Esperanza* he proposed a worker-peasant alliance that would expropriate land from large property-holders by force and revive the Inca custom of communal farming. He has denied any affiliation with the terrorists.

The guerrillas view today's Peru as resembling prerevolutionary China: a colonialized, semifeudal land whose peasants have been forced to produce wealth for the country's small, non-Indian population. They question whether peasants benefit from high-technology farming methods and advocate replacing the capitalist market system with subsistence farming. Such a program explains why Sendero has forbidden many peasants—seemingly their natural allies—from selling goods in the marketplace and has murdered commercial farmers who violate the directive.

"Sendero is an Andean expression because its major objective is to reach poor peasants," explained Ayacucho-born anthropologist Rodrigo Montoya. He suggested that the terrorists have capitalized on the peasants' historical resentment of the government in Lima, which they believe has ignored them. (In one province, where nearly one of every five babies dies at birth, health care is largely unavailable.) The peasants' sense of abandonment, Montoya maintains, "creates an Andean anger against an old and secular oppression. What fondness can you have for a democratic system from which you do not benefit but, on the contrary, are a victim of?"

Sendero's methods of killing derive from Andean folkways. Many victims are turned face down. Others have their eyes and tongues gouged out and their hands and feet cut off. Such ritual murders, anthropologists suggest, reflect an Indian belief that the victim's spirit must be prevented from leaving the grave and revealing the murderer. Also, hanging dogs from lampposts is an Inca expression of disrespect.

Near a small park in Lima, a well-dressed young man lowers his voice and looks about nervously, concerned someone will identify him as a Senderista because of his conversation with a reporter. Previously a member of the United Left, he said he was disillusioned because it has accomplished nothing beyond electing candidates to high offices. "The United Left has been totally worn out by electoral politics," he said. "What you have to realize is that the key word here is 'corruption.' Police will take bribes; scholars will plagiarize themselves; everyone is corrupt. . . . We are witnessing the total demoralization of a society that has no more expectations for utopias. I'd rather vote for Gonzolo than Barrantes [Lima's leftist Mayor]. What we need is *pachacuti* ['political upheaval']."

Four years and thousands of deaths after it emerged from obscurity, Sendero's bold revolution remains confined within its own country, a potent, hybrid seed blown down from the Andes to germinate in urban areas. Even those who believe Sendero will remain contained within Peru's borders, however, readily concede one thing. The insurgents have created a phenomenon few Latin American neighbors can ignore: the capacity for destruction among disaffected people energized by revolutionary chemistry, terrorist strategy and one relentless zealot. □

MICHIGAN PEACE PROTESTS

A Conspiracy of Conscience

JIM SCHWARTZ

Peace activists who have demonstrated on the property of one of Michigan's largest defense contractors could wind up spending years behind bars. "It's the first time in the U.S. that anti-nuclear activists who have committed minor crimes are charged with multiple criminal offenses," points out Julie Hurwitz, an attorney who represents several protesters. "It's obvious that the prosecutor is using those charges to quash the peace community."

Peace groups in Michigan began taking to the streets early last year, shortly after they discovered that Williams Inter-

Jim Schwartz is a McGraw-Hill World News correspondent based in Detroit.

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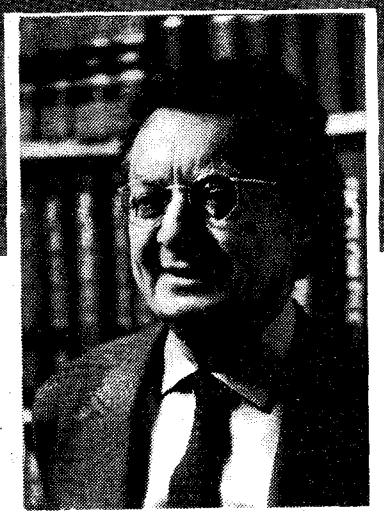

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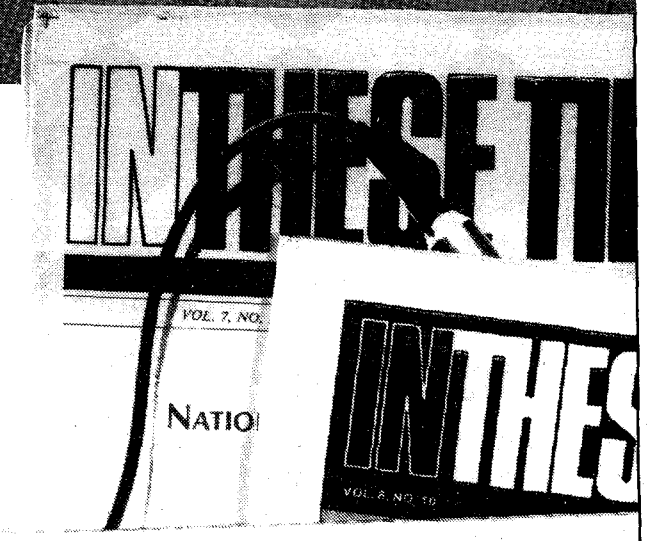

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national, a firm based in suburban Detroit, makes the jet engines used to power the cruise missile. One Christian group, Covenant for Peace, had been involved in other protests, but the Rev. Peter Dougherty, a member of the group, explains, "We decided to concentrate our efforts on Williams, since they were in our own backyard."

Protesters began putting pressure on the firm by using civil disobedience tactics. As their first act, five demonstrators cut through the Hurricane fence surrounding Williams's sixty-three-acre site in Walled Lake and wrote "Christ Lives, Disarm" in ashes on one wall. They also poured ashes on the plant's driveway and dropped photographs of victims of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings in the ashes.

Nobody was arrested, but Williams obtained a permanent injunction from the circuit court in Pontiac barring protesters from trespassing on the company's property. In addition, the injunction prohibits activists from blocking the plant's driveway and from encouraging, inviting or enticing anyone else to do so.

Since then, dozens of protesters have been arrested, the largest roundup occurring in the fall of 1983, when fifty-three were sent to jail after blocking the plant's driveway. Oakland County prosecutor L. Brooks Patterson, who achieved statewide prominence by championing the revival of the death penalty, charged many of those protesters with conspiracy to trespass, obstruct traffic and disturb the peace. The conspiracy charges elevated simple misdemeanors to felonies, carrying jail sentences of up to two and a half years.

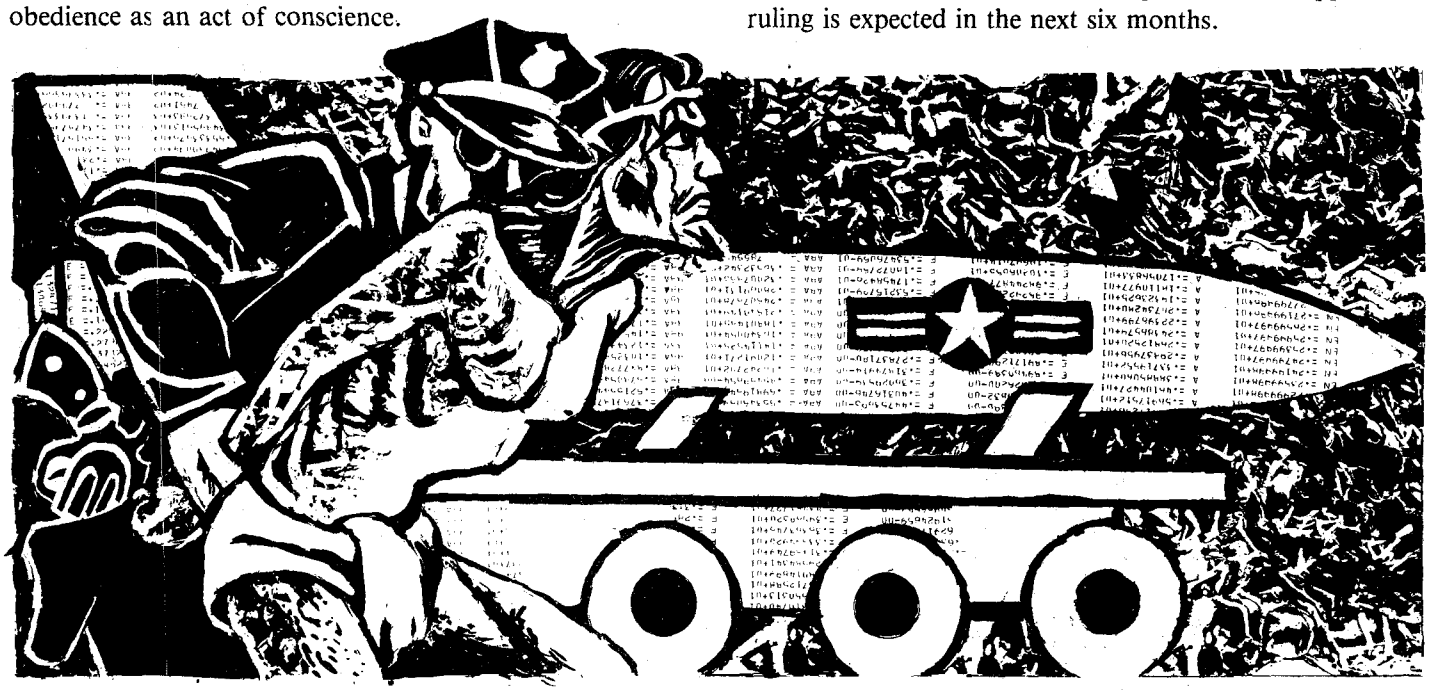
Patterson's action was condemned by the Detroit *Free Press* and by the Michigan State Bar Association's civil liberties committee. "We felt that Patterson abused prosecutorial discretion," said Leonard Grossman, former chair of the committee. "He acted out of vindictiveness and threatened free speech." Several of the people charged with conspiracy had simply made speeches advocating civil disobedience as an act of conscience.

Civil libertarians also criticize the methods Patterson used to obtain evidence. Last December, undercover detectives from the sheriff's office raided a local church where many peace groups met, seeking evidence against Covenant for Peace. They took Father Dougherty's files, which included his diary and a sign-in book listing names and addresses of activists. The prosecutor also used undercover agents to spy on demonstrators. As Hurwitz asks, "Who knows what information they were collecting, and how it will be used to prevent people from participating in peaceful, legal protests?"

Patterson's methods aren't the only thing worrying civil libertarians. They are concerned about the punishment meted out to demonstrators who violated the injunction Williams obtained banning protesters from trespassing. In June Oakland County Circuit Court Judge James Thorburn sentenced a group of protesters to an indefinite jail sentence for violating the injunction. They were guilty of civil contempt, he ruled, and would have to remain in jail until they promised not to violate the injunction again. Some appealed and were released from jail pending the court's decision. Others were released after they staged a twelve-day fast.

Critics charge that the judge's civil-contempt citations violate the activists' civil liberties. Civil contempt is normally used in situations where a defendant holds the keys to the jail cell. For instance, a father who fails to make child-support payments can win his freedom by paying up. Criminal contempt, on the other hand, is applied to cases where individuals violate a court order. The penalty is up to thirty days in jail.

By citing the protesters for civil instead of criminal contempt, the judge attempted to deny them the right to follow the dictates of their conscience, says Bill Goodman, an attorney who represents several of them. In their appeal the demonstrators claim that by requiring a promise not to violate the injunction, the judge abused his discretion. Currently, the case is before the Michigan Court of Appeals. A ruling is expected in the next six months.



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In the meantime, protesters say the campaign at Williams will continue. "Our goal is to stop the engines," says John Zettner of the Detroit Peace Community. To accomplish that, activists will continue to hold weekly vigils outside the plant gates. And there is likely to be more civil disobedience, as well as efforts by those in Michigan to link their movement to campaigns in other parts of the country. Currently, such protests are taking place in Bangor, Washington, and Groton, Connecticut, where activists are demonstrating against the Trident submarine. Other groups are applying nonviolent pressure to defense contractors in Minneapolis; Toronto, Ontario; and Orlando, Florida.

The Michigan protesters hope that eventually a national peace movement will grow out of those campaigns. "Most of us feel that political parties are bankrupt and that we need alternatives to that," says Father Dougherty, adding, "Soon, we hope to see the emergence of new resistance communities, based on real human values." □

Chile's Road

(*Continued From Front Cover*)

to punctuate a moment. Chile's political crisis, building for the past eighteen months, had come to a head.

In the following four days, some 450 opposition leaders, including labor and student activists, most of them leftists, were hunted and arrested; offices of dissident organizations were raided and searched; more than 350 detainees were banished to Pisagua, a northern desert prison camp; all but one of seven independent newspapers and newsmagazines were ordered to suspend publication and all other media were forbidden to carry news of political developments. Some 6,000 slum dwellers, primarily supporters of the left, were rounded up. On a single day during the first week, the church's human rights office, the Vicariate of Solidarity, was visited by 1,500 political victims seeking legal aid.

Those under attack responded as they did in the aftermath of the September 11, 1973, coup. The Associated Press reported, for example, that the situation was "driving hundreds of dissidents into hiding. . . . Leftist organizers have abandoned their party offices and homes to avoid arrest, according to priests in Santiago's slums, where many of the organizers live, and others are quietly burning literature that might offend the . . . government."

Two weeks earlier, Pinochet had warned that continued protests against his rule might provoke "another Eleventh." That threat and the state of siege were in response to mass protests, which, after five months of fatigue and repression, had escalated since September 4 and, in particular, to the moderately successful general strike of October 29 and 30. The regime also made much of the recent bombing of a police truck which killed several officers (the second such at-

Cynthia Brown writes frequently on Latin America for The Nation.

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tack this year), and sought to justify the state of siege as a legitimate response to terrorism.

The move was indeed defensive, but the threat lay elsewhere. Pinochet's maneuvering room is more limited than it was six months ago, in both political and economic terms. On September 17 the regime raised import tariffs, a measure thoroughly at odds with the precepts of Chicago school monetarism it used to embrace, and devalued the peso by 23 percent. The devaluation, the latest and most severe in a series of them since August 1981, will make it harder for Pinochet to offer economic concessions to his conservative critics, as he has done for the past year, and the suffering it will bring to the urban shantytowns will stiffen resistance there.

The political context of the state-of-siege order was the resignation on November 5 of Pinochet's entire Cabinet. Interior Minister Sergio Jarpa, in turn, blamed the Cabinet crisis on a meeting in Rome between representatives of the Chilean Catholic Church and Chilean Marxists in exile. But his action was merely a way to justify the regime's increasingly hostile attitude toward the church. Actually, the Rome meeting had consisted only of the informal routine contacts often made between various members of opposition groups and the church. It became the pretext for a Cabinet move that would signal a shift in overall policy—a harder line to come. Saying that the meeting had revealed the church's political bias, the regime then forbade the Rev. Ignacio Gutiérrez, head of the Vicariate of Solidarity, from returning to Chile from Rome, and thus sent a message of anger to the church as a whole.

Although nothing special in itself, the Rome meeting reflected, on the one hand, the church's near-total break with Pinochet and, on the other, its belief that successful opposition must include the Marxist left. Church-state relations have worsened so dramatically this year that, according to one well-placed source, the bishops are prepared to make a formal demand for Pinochet's resignation "at the appropriate moment," and the Vatican will support them when they do. The growing grass-roots influence of the leftist Democratic Popular Movement (M.D.P.), the political front led by Communists and Socialists, became evident once again during the general strike, as did the M.D.P.'s good relations with broad coalitions within the labor movement.

In addition, even Pinochet could not afford to ignore persistent rumors and magazine reports during the previous two months about a "constitutional pact" under consideration by all opposition parties, including the Christian Democrats (P.D.C.) and Communists (P.C.). The *pacto*, a document which all parties were invited to sign, reportedly establishes a common framework for the transition to democracy and, beyond that, for the construction of a new constitutional order. Such a pact would be a significant development: the adherence of both the P.D.C. and the P.C. would bring together the pillars of the opposition's major political fronts, which have a history of mutual mistrust.

By cracking down primarily on the left, the regime evidently hopes to break the left's stride and deter the center from cooperating more closely with it. In one guise or another, that has been the government's strategy since August 1983, when Jarpa, newly appointed as Interior Minister, began playing the "soft cop" to Pinochet's hard: Jarpa called for dialogue between the government and its centrist opponents, while Pinochet stepped up repression of both the center and the left [see Brown, "Protest in Chile—The Road Ahead," *The Nation*, December 3, 1983]. At first, the foreign press interpreted Jarpa's resignation as a gesture of disgust with Pinochet's intransigence. Although the two men have distinct priorities and represent different power centers, Jarpa resumed his post the next day and was signing detention and banishment orders with hardly pause for a breath. Those who like to characterize him as a liberal might recall his years as a fervent Chilean Nazi and his involvement in the 1973 coup.

Among Jarpa's boosters, predictably, is the Reagan Administration. In the aftermath of the state-of-siege order, while hundreds of arrests were taking place, the State Department called for a renewed dialogue, an implicit endorsement of Jarpa's strategy. Such backing was especially welcome at a time when the Inter-American Development Bank was about to consider a $340 million Chilean loan package. [As of last week, the bank had approved $160.7 million of the proposed loans, with U.S. backing.] While the U.S. statement condemned both the "cycle of violence by the extreme left, and repressive violence by the government," its emphasis on a "growing terrorist problem" seriously misrepresented the scope and nature of political violence in Chile and echoed the regime's interpretation of the political crisis. Finally, it made no comment on the legitimacy of the state of siege itself.

In press dispatches out of Chile, "violence" is used to de-

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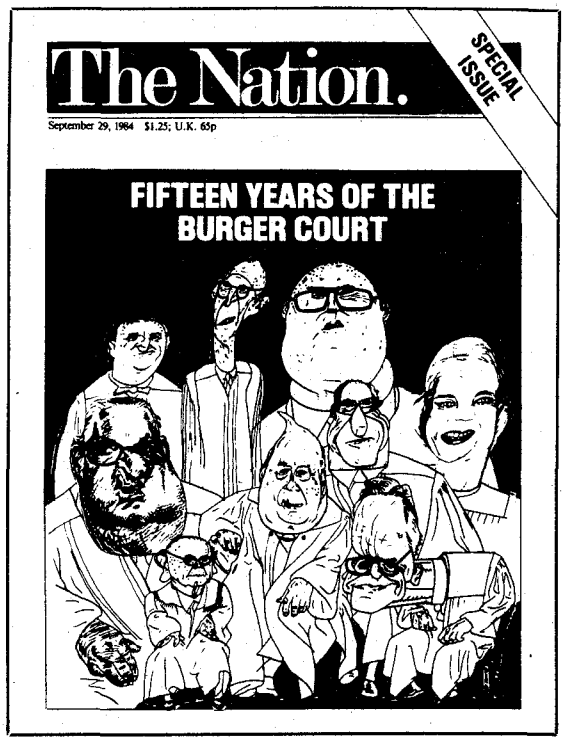

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scribe everything from secret-police agents beating demonstrators to slum dwellers pelting heavily armed police with rocks. Bombings are another matter; a leftist brigade named for the independence leader Manuel Rodríguez has taken responsibility for several acts of sabotage against state property, including a series of bombings of power lines. But what of the now-common street bombs that explode in front of activists' houses? Or the blackouts of slum neighborhoods caused by coordinated bombings on the eve of national protests? Or the case of the "dynamited woman," described by the government as a terrorist who was blown up while setting a bomb? (This happened in May; later she was revealed to have been a detainee whose death was staged by the secret police for propaganda purposes.) And what of the bombing of a church in the southern city of Punta Arenas in September? One of the perpetrators, apparently, was an army lieutenant whose identity card was found at the site.

Even the recent police-truck bombing is regarded as suspect by many observers. No opposition group has claimed responsibility for it, and, more important, human rights organizations report that the regime has undertaken no serious investigation. That is peculiar, indeed, in a case that according to the government, was so important it helped prompt the state of siege. The roster of incidents involving government provocation also includes the "armed clashes"—twenty of them so far this year—that witness accounts or other evidence have shown to be assassinations by security forces. As both church and secular human rights groups have said time and again, terrorism in Chile is a policy of the state, not of the opposition. The official campaign against "terrorism," they note, is a method of uniting the army by playing on its fears of political change.

The state-of-siege order may have had a similar motive. It was not a legal necessity, for adequately repressive laws were already in place and many of the abuses now making headlines were already occurring on a somewhat smaller scale, from press controls to mass arrests. In a society where, for eleven years, the courts have failed to protect the most basic human rights, it hardly seems necessary to impose a state of siege that denies all forms of judicial recourse. In a society where torture is institutionalized, the government hardly needed a state of siege to operate secret detention centers.

But Pinochet has made a point: he has options remaining. The United States still prefers him to the alternative of a center-left coalition, as its taste for "dialogue" makes plain. He still has the army, and he could crack down still harder. Indeed, after the state of siege began, it was widely believed in Santiago that he had wanted an even more drastic plan, the "jumbo" solution, in which all the major opposition leaders would have been put on a jumbo jet and sent into exile. What Pinochet cannot do, however, is allay the personal economic suffering that has driven peaceful people to desperation, in middle-class neighborhoods as well as in shantytowns. Without an answer to their demands for bread and jobs, he will have more demands to face as time goes on. □

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BOOKS & THE ARTS.

The Great Adventure

CAROL BRIGHTMAN

"THE GOOD WAR": An Oral History of World War Two. *By Studs Terkel. Pantheon. 589 pp. $19.95.*

"*The Good War*" is the fifth and finest entry in Studs Terkel's neorealist variation on Dos Passos's *USA*. In it one learns things about World War II never taught in school, but more significantly, one learns why even a bad war, Vietnam, failed to undo the mystique and the legacy of "the good war." For Terkel has elicited an elemental but unexamined truth about our society from the American veterans he has interviewed: we are very likely the only people on earth whose vision of the good life is historically inseparable from an experience of war—one that involved some twenty-seven nations and took the lives of more than 50 million people.

"I was pulled in two directions," recalls Bob Rasmus, then a rifleman rumbling through Europe on his first tour abroad:

> Gee, I don't wanna get killed. And, Boy, this is gorgeous country. . . . When the truck took us from Cologne south through Bonn, for me it was, Hey, Beethoven's birthplace. . . . I was struck by the sheer beauty of the countryside, the little villages, the churches. This sort of thing the impressionists did.

Images like these from the Western front (in sharp contrast with those from the Pacific) taught small-town boys to think big. When they got home they no longer wanted to work with their hands as their fathers did. "The war changed our whole idea of how we wanted to live when we came back," explains Jack Short, who returned to Poughkeepsie from Central Europe with a longing for "a good job, a respectable life," and made it all happen, as did many, with the G.I. Bill.

What is arresting about those visions is how well they served to insulate American soldiers from some of the more brutal facts of the European war. When Bob Rasmus's unit relieved the Eighth Division on a "quiet front" along the Rhine in 1945, he had an "inkling of some other evil abroad" besides the retreating German Army. That evil was the slave labor camps, where young Americans saw prisoners of war killing horses in the streets for food and digging mass graves to bury their dead. "As each town was captured, you were liberating Slavs, Poles, French," Rasmus remembers. "It was often highly emotional." The liberation of those ghostly ruins became for American soldiers one of the transcendent experiences of the war; it, too, helped to distract their attention from Nazi genocide, while it also provided them with an image of American power and goodness. According to Rasmus's memory, news of the death camps had not reached his unit in 1945. When the men took Lüdenscheid, they camped in a beer hall and celebrated alongside a mountain of clothing piled high on the dance floor. "You knew this wasn't just a Salvation Army collecting clothes. . . . [But] it really didn't register with us." Now he realizes that it was probably clothing stripped from Jews who were sent to their death at nearby Dachau.

Jack Short came a bit closer to the truth when his unit stumbled on a camp in Nordhausen just before the German surrender: "It was unbelievable. The dying and the many dead stacked up like cordwood." Nordhausen was the site of the underground rocket factory and crematorium where some 30,000 prisoners of war and Jews lost their lives, but if Short realized the full significance of the place, he doesn't actually say so. Short's commanding officer hustled his troops away and returned to photograph the site, later distributing a set of prints to each member of the unit. "I never discuss what I did in the service with my children," Short observes, but sometimes he pulls out those old pictures, to refresh his memory.

It is strange to find so little trace of the annihilation of European Jews in the memories of these veterans, until one is reminded by David Wyman's *The Abandonment of the Jews* of how hard both the State Department and the British Foreign Office worked to control public awareness of the truth. As Terkel is able to show, it was their seeming immunity from evil that allowed many American soldiers to move through the most terrifying moments of combat with a curious detachment—at least in retrospect. Rasmus's buddy Red Prendergast:

> So there I am wandering around with the whole German Army shooting at me, and all I've got is a .45 automatic. . . . Every place you went there were bodies and soldiers laying around. Mostly Americans. . . . You'd run out of ammunition with [one gun], you'd throw it away and try to find something else. One time I had a submachine gun, first experience I ever had with one.

That was the Battle of the Bulge.

Looking back at the war, Prendergast concludes that "in spite of the really bad times, it was certainly the most exciting experience of my life. As a character in *Terry and the Pirates* once put it so eloquently, 'We shot the last act in the first reel.' . . . Everything after that is anticlimactic." In a very real sense, men like Prendergast had their great adventure in World War II. And their triumphant survival amid foreign ruins gave the good war a meaning it could never have for the veterans of, say, Stalingrad, whose horrific memories Terkel contrasts so dramatically with the reveries of Americans.

For American veterans of the Pacific, however—where the atomic bomb opened a war that, in a sense, is still going on—World War II was something else. Nobody in *"The Good War"* toured the Pacific in wide-eyed wonder. "What you tended to see were miserable natives and piles of dead Japanese and dead Americans," remembers Robert Lekachman, who was drafted into the infantry after Pearl Harbor. There is a bitterness to American memories here that is absent from even the most cynical G.I.'s reflections on how swiftly the U.S. command "climbed into bed" with the Nazis after the German surrender.

In December 1941, when John Garcia was a 16-year-old apprentice pipe fitter working on the U.S.S. Shaw, he was ordered to cut open the wrecked hulls of three ships overturned during the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. After eighteen days his crew managed to rescue some 300 men who were still alive in the U.S.S. West Virginia. Thousands

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more were dead. Later, Garcia joined the Seventh Infantry Division in time for a quick raid on the Marshall Islands, then went back to Hawaii, where he was ordered to perform in a "swimming show" for visiting General Douglas MacArthur and President Franklin Roosevelt. (American recollections of the war are punctuated by these strange interludes, none stranger than the time General MacArthur waded onto a beach in the Philippines and said, "I have returned," then turned around with all his aides behind him and repeated it for the cameras.) Garcia went on to Okinawa, where he did what he had to do: "When I saw a Japanese, I shot at him and ducked. Shot and ducked. . . . I was drinking about a fifth and a half of whiskey every day. . . . It was the only way I could kill."

One night he shot at a figure darting across a field in front of his perimeter; in the morning he learned that the bullet had gone through a woman and out the back of a baby strapped to her shoulders. Today Garcia manages apartment houses in Los Angeles. Two weeks before his appointment with Terkel he had another of his recurrent dreams about the woman he killed—the only flashback, so reminiscent of Vietnam, in *"The Good War."*

Celebrated battles on both fronts are not much celebrated in Terkel's book, and this is especially true of the great battles in the Pacific. E.B. (Sledgehammer) Sledge kept notes of casualties in the pages of his Gideon's Bible: "We had more than a hundred percent at Okinawa [before reinforcements] and almost that many at Peleliu." Another marine, Ted Allenby, says, "the only way we took Iwo Jima was because we outnumbered them three to one. . . . [and] we had to starve them out, month after month."

Stories of American savagery toward dead and dying Japanese soldiers are recounted, more often than not, with shame in these interviews. But hatred toward the Japanese ran deep—and still simmers when veterans contemplate America's postwar realignments. Sledge's drill instructor reminded his troops:

> You're not going to Europe, you're going to the Pacific. . . . Most Americans . . . are taught not to hit below the belt. It's not sportsmanlike. Well, nobody has taught the Japs that. . . . Kick him in the balls before he kicks you in yours.

Sledge's brother, who fought in the Battle of the Bulge, told him what good fighters the Germans were, but that when things were hopeless, they surrendered. "When they surrendered," Sledge adds, "they were guys just like us. With the Japanese, it was not that way." Japanese soldiers were liable to hang themselves rather than be taken prisoner by American forces, a fact that comes into focus when one remembers that at home hundreds of thousands of American citizens were being carted off to detention camps simply because they were Japanese—another front that Terkel explores in *"The Good War."*

The Japanese emerge as human beings for American soldiers only during the occupation, and nowhere more vividly than in a story told by a former Michigan City steelworker named Joseph Stasiak who was assigned to guard duty in Hiroshima. Stasiak's unit landed in Japan two months after the United States unfurled its "gimmick bomb," first over Hiroshima then over Nagasaki, thereby concentrating in two raids all the firepower unleashed in ninety-nine raids on sixty-six Japanese cities and towns in the preceding months. After his unit finished burning what remained of a vermin-infested evacuated town nine miles from Hiroshima, Stasiak was reassigned to Ground Zero to guard a copper smelter full of coins. "In the rubble is arms and legs and torsos," Stasiak recalls in one of Terkel's most memorable interviews. "The smell of death all over. The place was full of these former people."

After a few days alone, Stasiak looked up to find a man staring at him. "A walkin' balloon, this Japanese. . . . His fingers, it was like giant rubber gloves. . . . I was gonna shoot him, but he makes these motions like he don't mean any harm. . . . He wanted to be by me, 'cause he was like an outcast." They sat together for a few hours. "He kept saying, 'You see, you see, you see.' I kept lookin' at him. I realized he wanted to show me somethin'." They walked maybe six blocks, "smoke and drizzle everywhere. Around the corner . . . is a crematorium. Bodies and rats. Guys would take 'em and make big pyres out of 'em and burn 'em. . . . All of a sudden, one of these fellas seen us standing there and there comes this screaming in Japanese." Stasiak shot over their heads and they fell back; they were coming for the man who had brought him there. "This was like a tremendous humiliation."

Stasiak led the man, whose name was Akira, back to the smelter. By day they shared Stasiak's rations, and at night Akira would disappear. One morning "daylight came and I'm lookin' for this guy. . . . I'm gettin' lonesome, too. I'm missing this Japanese balloon man. Like he's my friend." He searches through the rubble and finds some feet sticking out. It was Akira. The men from the pyres had killed him. Stasiak started walking aimlessly until, out of nowhere, an American jeep came along and picked him up. "They didn't nobody say nothin'."

After he got home, Stasiak's abdomen and testicles began to swell. His doctor tried to get him into a Veterans Administration hospital, but the V.A. ruled that his disorders were not service connected. A Japanese he met who knew he had been in Hiroshima said the only chance he had was to stay in water constantly. Now, Stasiak spends six hours every day in a tub. He has three souvenirs of his five days in Hiroshima: a big bag of copper coins, a photo of the crematorium and something called "hemopneumothorax": liver, heart and lungs "ballooning."

For most American soldiers who returned from the Pacific, the curtain dropped on the war with more finality than it did for the veterans of the European campaign. For these men and women and their families, the very idea of the good life was born, in part, out of the need to forget. In 1945, the welcome mat back home was a yellow brick road to the Emerald City. "While the rest of the world came out bruised and scarred and nearly destroyed, we came out with the most unbelievable machinery, tools, manpower, money," remembers Paul Edwards, a wartime Red Cross officer who once worked in New Deal programs:

> The war was fun for America—if you'll pardon my bitterness. . . . Farmers in South Dakota that I administered relief to . . . when I came home were worth a quarter-million dollars. . . . What was true there was true all over America. New gratifications they'd never known in their lives. Mass travel, mass vacations.

For ethnic Americans, the new American dreams hatched in the ruined cities of the Old World triggered a more fundamental change. Before World War II, "staying in America was something [Italian-Americans] did to make

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money," explains Paul Pisicano. "You didn't stay in America to lead a good life. . . . That happened after the war." He goes on: "You never enlisted to defend America. No, America was like your boss. (Laughs.)" Mussolini's disgrace covered Italian-Americans with shame, and the war's end was greeted with deep relief—and what Pisicano calls "this amazing transformation. They're now the most right-wing."

Pisicano remembers standing on a corner during the Harlem riots in 1945, when a friend drove up and said, "'Come on down. . . . Let's beat up some niggers.' It was wonderful. It was new. The Italo-Americans stopped being Italo and started becoming Americans. . . . Now we're like you guys, right?" A whole generation from Pisicano's neighborhood became professionals. Italian shops and basement wine cellars disappeared and Italians started speaking English to one another. "We became respectable. We lost class."

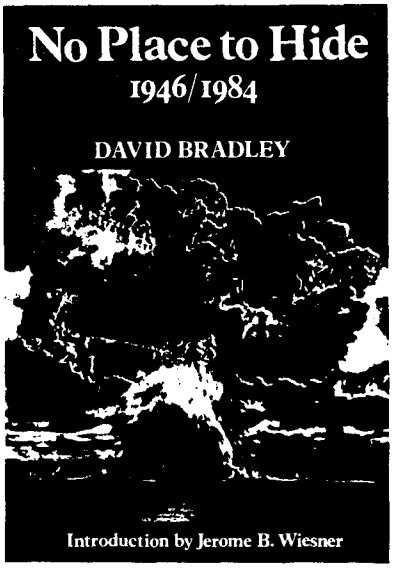
When Dempsey Travis, a black real-estate broker and writer in Chicago, describes the war as "a step on the first rung of the ladder," it is hard for us to remember that he is talking about the same war that received black troops in Jim Crow trains and assigned them, more often than not, to all-black labor battalions. Travis himself was shot up in a racial incident in boot camp and singled out as a troublemaker because of his high I.Q. But for him, as for others, the wartime intermingling of men from different backgrounds pried open new opportunities. Travis was spotted by an ex-Texas Ranger, Major Sloan, who insisted he study the Bretton Woods report and explain it to the troops; later Sloan made him manager of the first integrated PX in Maryland.

Accounts like these recall an early observation of James Baldwin's: "I could not be certain whether I was really rich or really poor, really black or really white, really male or really female, really talented or a fraud, really strong or merely stubborn. In short, I had become an American." A better envoi for the good life in postwar America is hard to imagine.

Postwar wheelers and dealers in Washington, such as Tommy (the Cork) Corcoran, emerged from the war triumphant in the faith that it was not only "the great adventure of my life" but the wave of the future as well. When F.D.R. said, "Tommy, cut out this New Deal stuff. It's tough to win a war," Corcoran moved into "the Pacific business" and teamed up with Chiang Kai-shek's pal Claire Chennault to send the Flying Tigers to China. "I was in a completely new world over there," Corcoran told Terkel before he died in 1981:

> Look at the maps. . . . maps tell you more than all the books in the world. See where the green stuff is? See in China? That's the only place where there's fertile land. See Manchuria up there? Where the coal mines are. See little Formosa? Formosa is a fixed airplane carrier. As long as it's in our pocket . . . goddamn it, I'm so fascinated by the Far East, I can't tell you.

There's an ecstasy in this reminiscence that hints of buried treasure, former loves—and it captured the imagination of the generation that brought us Formosa, Korea and Vietnam. In many ways, *"The Good War"* comes full circle to illuminate the present. Joe Kennedy (in Corcoran's recollection) privately argued for Hitler's takeover of



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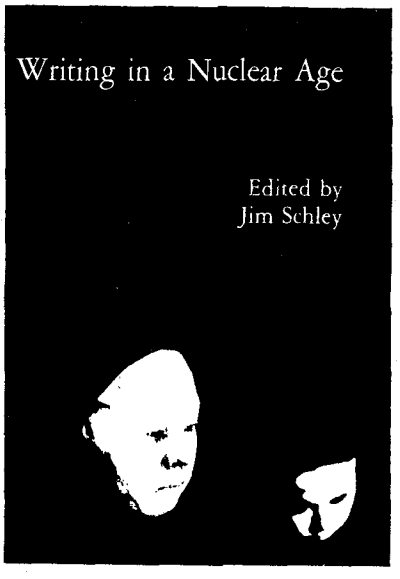

47 writers, including Denise Levertov, Grace Paley, Robert Penn Warren, Seamus Heaney, Maxine Kumin, William Matthews, Galway Kinnell, William Stafford, and Susan Griffin, explore the multitude of ways contemporary imaginative writing has come to terms with—or sought to evade—the acute sense of danger we all face. Dedicated to the potential for language to expose and comfort, prophesy and inspire, these writers have tried to restore to poetry and fiction their historic role as wellsprings of new thoughts and feelings.

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Europe, suggesting that we could have assassinated him later, but that we could never do business with Russian totalitarianism—thus, in a sense, anticipating NATO. Henry Luce appears reviewing a parade of U.S. Marines in China in 1944. And there's Corcoran pushing Bayer Chemical out of Latin America to launch the American pharmaceutical industry's control of the world market. For men at the command centers of industry and government, World War II was the great awakening of the imperial dream.

Terkel's book also reminds us of some of the strange alliances that accompanied America's first tentative steps into the European theater. Veterans of the Spanish Civil War such as Milton Wolff organized counterespionage networks for the Office of Strategic Services (later the C.I.A.) through their civil war contacts in Yugoslavia, Austria, Italy, Czechoslovakia and Poland. One speaker notes that official American entrance into the war began not with Pearl Harbor but with the secret service that former members of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade performed for British intelligence in Egypt and North Africa early in 1941. In the end, Wolff and men like him were withdrawn from action for the same reason they were invited in: because of their ability to mobilize partisan (mostly Communist) networks throughout Europe.

The alliance that the United States forged after D-Day with German generals from the Wehrmacht and the Waffen S.S., who were "captured" under Operation Paper Clip, was more enduring. Promised citizenship for their help in illuminating the battle order of the Red Army, the generals were joined in Washington by top German scientists such as Werner von Braun and put in the hands of a 19-year-old "morale officer" named Arno Mayer. There is no more bizarre scene in *"The Good War"* than Mayer's description of the day he escorted four German scientists in long leather coats and green Tyrolean hats on a Christmas shopping expedition to the lingerie counter of Landsberg Brothers, a Jewish department store. Mayer, who used to be hailed over the loudspeaker at Fort Knox as "the intellectual fuck" (and was known privately by the Germans as *der Kleine Judenbube*), was prohibited from revealing anything about what he was doing at "Post Office Box 1142, Alexandria, Va.," Operation Paper Clip's secret headquarters. Whenever he was asked, his answer was the same, a chilling postscript to Terkel's masterful communiqué: "I was preparing for World War Three." □

Facework

STEVEN G. KELLMAN

FACE VALUE: The Politics of Beauty. *By Robin Tolmach Lakoff and Raquel L. Scherr. Routledge & Kegan Paul. 312 pp. $25.*

Although there is scant beauty in politics, there is indeed a politics of beauty, a link between how we define and treat physical appearance and how social power is organized and exercised. The judgment of Paris was a beauty contest whose consequences were more extensive than the mere disposition of an apple. Paris, who did not know the Seine from the Susquehanna, ought to have realized it was a no-win situation, that whatever his choice it would automatically incur the enmity of two formidable women. When Paris selected Aphrodite as the fairest, she rewarded him with gorgeous Helen; but Hera and Athena retaliated by destroying his hometown, Troy, and by disrupting the entire civilized world.

Aside from Presidential elections, the pre-eminent contemporary beauty contest is the Miss America pageant. It is a curious fact that the first Miss America, 16-year-old Margaret Gorman of Washington, D.C., was crowned in August 1921—just one year after the Nineteenth Amendment gave women the vote. As much an affront to feminism as vivisection is to animal rights, the pageant is now more popular than ever and remains a graphic reminder that ancient notions and uses of beauty die hard.

The authors of *Face Value: The Politics of Beauty* put a sanguine complexion on the problem. Their goal is to demystify beauty, their vehicle is polemic and their alternative is an active life in which we each assume responsibility for our own identities. "The whole notion of female beauty," according to Lakoff and Scherr, "depends on a hierarchy which exists to distinguish the 'haves' from the 'have nots,' those who merit visibility from those condemned to invisibility."

Although they devote a chapter to men, Lakoff and Scherr are primarily concerned with female beauty and almost exclusively with Western, particularly American, culture. They review a series of myths: beauty is God-given, is universal and permanent, is benign, is inseparable from stupidity, is mentally unsettling, is powerful. And they contrast these with a series of countermyths: beauty is arduously acquired, is mutable, is malign, is linked to intelligence, is serene, is feeble. Their conclusion, drawn from anthropology, philosophy, psychology and the arts, that the truth is somewhere between the extremes seems so unexceptionable as to be uninteresting. After surveying the standards of female beauty that have obtained for three millenniums, the authors express disappointment over the lack of consistent, objective criteria; the only recurrent element they discover is "feminine helplessness and passivity, however this is to be achieved, whether because the woman is pregnant, or weak, dependent and sickly, or fat and slowed by her girth."

This is a sublimely ambitious book, but its breezy generalizations do not always clear the air. It may be that the discipline of esthetics does not provide a comprehensive account of beauty, but Lakoff and Scherr are not able to convince me of that in a mere four pages. They manage to quote Burke, Aristotle and Aquinas, but ignore Plato, Plotinus, Augustine, Kant and many others who have made contributions to the discussion. Though they lament that Freud "has virtually nothing to say on the subject of beauty," they might have found a footnote to his *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* provocative: "There is to my mind no doubt that the concept of 'beautiful' has its roots in sexual excitation and that its original meaning was 'sexually stimulating.'"

The authors too glibly assert that "artists, like poets, have always availed themselves of feminine beauty as the

Steven G. Kellman, author of The Self-Begetting Novel *(Columbia University Press) and of the forthcoming* Loving Reading: Erotics of the Text *(Archon Books), teaches comparative literature at the University of Texas, San Antonio.*

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lodestone of their efforts, the justification of their genius." It hardly seems to have been a lodestone to Baudelaire, who believed that truth is sooty, or to Henry Miller, who describes *Tropic of Cancer* as "a kick in the pants to God, Man, Destiny, Time, Love, Beauty." If the female forms depicted by artists from Manet through Arbus are "beautiful," then the concept of pulchritude has changed radically. The repudiation of classical beauty is a central tenet of modernism, and Lakoff and Scherr might profitably have explored why.

They do formulate the intriguing equation beauty is to woman as penis is to man. They are at pains to argue that this is a more sophisticated and accurate formulation than the discredited Freudian theory of penis envy. Beauty and a phallus are not so much the distinguishing features of each sex as symbols of the distinctive power of each. According to Lakoff and Scherr, what "the girl envies is not the organ in its physical actuality, but the promise of power it signifies." It seems likely to me that female beauty conveys power, or privilege, over other women more than over men. And unless, like Hemingway and Fitzgerald, we believe that the size or performance of his organ somehow gives a man power over other men, the analogy between beauty and the penis is a fallacy.

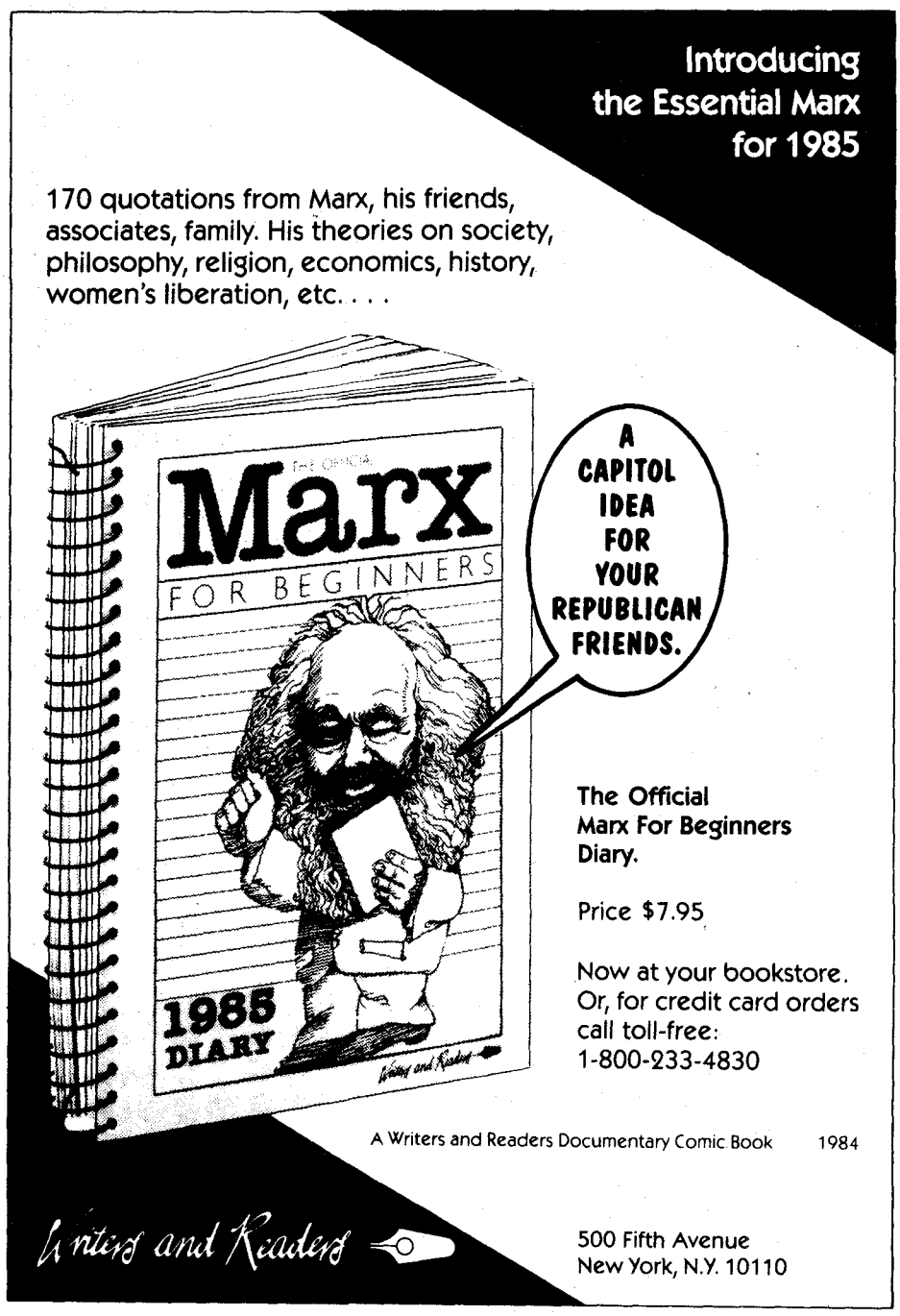
In the preface, each of the authors courageously reveals the personal background that drew her to this subject. Lakoff describes herself as a plain woman who early on opted out of the beauty sweepstakes. Scherr discusses her unconventional looks and attributes the end of a twelve-year relationship to a blond rival six years her junior. It would be easy to attribute autobiographical motives to the authors' preoccupation with why blondes seem to have more fun or with the privileges society accords young, attractive women. But to do so would be to avoid important issues by pursuing an argument *ad feminam*. Sour grapes can still yield robust wine.

The authors' methodology, though, is at times suspect. They devote most of a chapter titled "Beauty in Our Time" to a curiously disembodied, impressionistic survey of the history of *Vogue*, asserting, without demonstrating, that the magazine

> presents the most complete, concise, and consistent history of female beauty in this century, in part because it is primarily dedicated to the idealization of beauty, its display and its pursuit, and in the course of its history has paid tribute to all the modern Venuses of the age, whether society beauties, film stars, stage actresses, or models.

If beauty is a tool to reify and victimize women, they ought to have examined a publication more widely circulated among men, perhaps even investigated the murk of girlie magazines. A history of M-G-M or of Miss America might also have shed light on the development of American notions of beauty.

Lakoff and Scherr conducted a large number of interviews as data for their conclusions. While these provide anecdotal interest, their scholarly rigor remains moot. They find "grounds for optimism" in the responses of men they surveyed: "From the interview data, men would appear to be moving away from the old stereotype: they seem less interested in dewy and inexperienced youth, less concerned with superficial and bland prettiness." We are never told how large their sample is, or how representative in terms of age, income, occupation or education. It seems likely that subjects might want to appear more progressive than they really are and that the San Francisco Bay area, where all interviews apparently were conducted, would provide firmer grounds for op-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timism than most other parts of the country.

Face Value pays passing attention to other cultures, particularly in its discussion of physical mutilation—foot binding in China, clitoridectomy in Africa. But a more systematic analysis of traditions of beauty outside the United States might have suggested alternatives to our oppressive system. The authors are disturbed by the Nordic bias of American conceptions of beauty, but they do not examine whether other ethnic biases exist elsewhere.

Face Value rejects a single, authoritarian standard for beauty and quite naturally celebrates cultural diversity. It praises minority magazines that proclaim "that everyone—black, Asian, Indian, Mexican, Filipino—can be beautiful." Lakoff and Scherr seem to be both Platonists and egalitarians when they admit that a woman can be beautiful according to the standards of her distinctive type. But surely not all types are equal; is there a separate Platonic ideal for the cross-eyed and the leprous? Presumably, the authors would at least be willing to subdivide their categories further: a woman who does not conform to the generic Indian canon of beauty might still excel according to Sioux or Navajo or Ojibwa or Iroquois ideals. But why stop at a subgroup? Why not reduce it to a matter of each conforming to her individual criterion? In that case, everyone can indeed be beautiful, as much as everyone can be hideous. But that every woman is beautiful in her own way is a vapid piety that neither reassures nor conforms to common sense.

The fact of the matter is that within a given culture there is considerable agreement about the polarities of physical appearance. Faced with the realities of attraction and repulsion, should we feel exhilarated, guilty, envious or indifferent? According to Marlene Dietrich, who must be either an expert or an ignoramus on the subject, "In the realm of love and happiness or happiness and love, beauty lies like a feather on the scale of values." Lakoff and Scherr would have done well to show more precisely how that feather lies. They conclude their book by exhorting: "We must take the problem of beauty in hand, and reshape that magical ideal which has always enhanced our lives into something that enriches our humanity even more deeply." To label beauty a "magical ideal" is truly to close discussion, and to claim that it "has always enhanced our lives" is to contradict much of the authors' own evidence and analysis. While beauty is a voguish topic, and originality on it requires open eyes, *Face Value* resembles its title by promising more than it provides. □

ART.

ARTHUR C. DANTO

Julian Schnabel

In the 1940s, when the great New York school of painting was just a bunch of obscure and impoverished artists known almost to no one but one another, a decision was made to paint large canvases, since nobody was in any case going to buy small ones. Something like this is true today: painters produce large canvases because no one is interested in buying small ones. The difference is that the Abstract Expressionists did not expect to sell their large canvases either, and so there was something deeply touching in giving their work a monumentality, an almost public character—rather like not allowing the fact that you are unloved to stand in the way of writing marvelous love letters. The painter today realizes that there is no significant market for anything save the Important Painting, destined for the Important Gallery, the Important Collector and, ultimately, the Important Museum. The inaugural exhibition recently at the Museum of Modern Art consisted almost exclusively of Important Paintings in this sense: works expressly made for such occasions as inaugural exhibitions at MOMA. These days, making it large is a condition for making it big. If you do not make it big, you do not make it at all.

Few have made it larger or bigger than Julian Schnabel, ten of whose freshly made and gigantesque canvases are on display, through December 1, at the Pace Gallery in New York City. It is an exhibition that serves inadvertent pedagogical ends by providing students of the art scene with clear examples of what, size apart, the Important Painting is obliged to contain. A lot of pigment, for example, is a desired attribute, since this enables the artist to deposit evidence of creative frenzy on the very surface of the work, smearing, scooping, dripping, squeezing, gouging, scraping—mannerisms from the time when the physicality of paint seemed the most urgent artistic fact about paintings, and the palpable action of handling paint the most urgent fact about painting. Then there must be a subject commensurate with the importance of the Important Work. Nothing finer for that than a crucifixion, a yellow Jesus, say, and all the better if it has breasts, to make it timely: a woman on the cross! And let it be badly drawn, just to make it clear that feeling trumps dexterity. This is, after all, hard-rock painting, part of the heavy-metal *Zeitgeist*, all yowls and guts.

Schnabel's standard composition is of a piece with his crucifixion: a large space bisected vertically by a single figure, a huge voodoo doll swathed like a goggle-eyed Lazarus, some kind of King of the Sacred Woods peering out between spruce roots ("Spruce roots separate," the checklist says, mysteriously, leaving it unclear if this is for facility of shipping or only that it costs more if you want the spruce roots too). This takes care of surface, subject, scale and composition. What one has to add is something to serve as signature, which Schnabel does with his legendary sharded crockery, giving his paintings a vitality all the whipped pigment and portentous imagery aspire to but miss. The crucified yellow woman among broken plates may just be oppressed womanhood nailed to the cross of domesticity. But the plates make the work as gay and primitive as the Watts Towers.

It is difficult to imagine a more amiable show; the paintings are so anxious to please that it is as though they are wagging their tails. One cannot help liking, or even admiring, the person who made them for perceiving what the times require. And in fact the artist tips a sly wink of collusion at the critic by painting everything on velvet. Velvet is the fabric of vulgarity, the texture chosen by those who aspire to opulence without knowing what class really is, the stuff of cheap ornamental pillows and sham tapestries found in bazaars and *puces* in bordertowns or in the luxury motel. Schnabel's use of velvet is the one witty and allusive feature of his work, a nose thumb at his plushy clientele and an acknowledgment of the crass structures of the art world he has so ingeniously internalized. It is nevertheless these very structures that he draws on for his importance and

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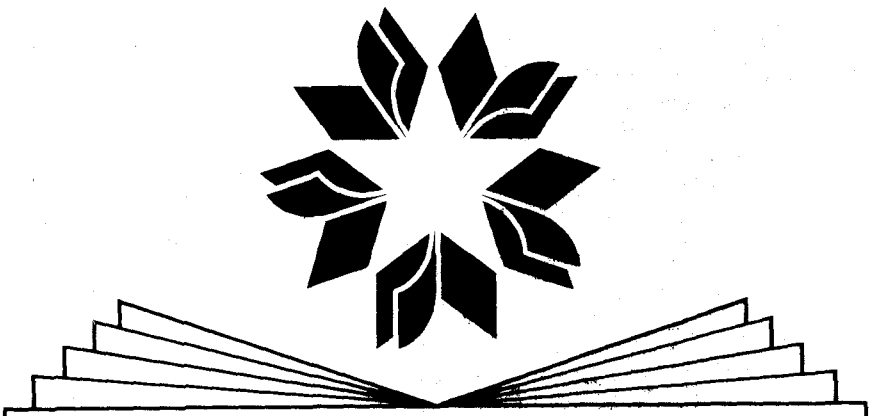
even his great interest, for Schnabel was the first of the Hot Artists, and the attributes I have identified in his paintings are exactly those features the Hot Artist's work is supposed to show.

The Hot Artist is an artifact of the contemporary art world rather than a person who works within a defined style that someone, but certainly not I, might designate as Hot Art. I have no intention of announcing a new movement on the model of Pop or Op—though the desolate acreage of loud and awful paintings in that inaugural MOMA exhibition, where the museum made its bid for contemporaneity by underwriting a kind of Hot Show, might give the impression that it was a show of Hot Art. What MOMA in fact presented was a body of painters each seeking to proclaim his or her hotness by appropriating the scale and idiom it was Schnabel's historical mission to have hit upon as what must be expected if an artist is truly hot. But there is a certain incoherence in the idea of a group of painters, all painting in more or less the same manner, being corporately hot. Hotness consists in being there when the art market demands someone new and fresh, able to knock one's eyes out (this reads like a want ad for a seraglio). The paintings at MOMA were by and large as indistinguishable as preppies.

To understand the phenomenon of hotness, one must understand something of the extraordinary transformations in the concept of patronage that define the economics of art in the late twentieth century. To some degree patrons have always called the shots, insisting on size, shape, subject, tone and, of course, price. When the chief patrons were the church and court, their taste pretty much determined the structures of art works as well, since given the expense of maintaining a workshop, very little, unless "work on paper," can have been done on spec. Art work done on spec became an economic possibility (realized primarily through easel painting, hence painting small enough not to represent too heavy an inventory) when it became a social possibility. It became a social possibility when, in the nineteenth century, something like a competitive market developed, with the small collector able to indulge his personal taste and the artist able to indulge his freedom. Romanticism offered an ideological compensation to artists who did not sell—the belief in their recognition by posterity became their consola-



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tion—and freedom became one of the conditions of marketability. It did so because the collector wanted what came freely forth from the artist's creative soul. This, of course, meant that the collector or dealer did not intervene in the creative process itself, but chose from what spontaneously appeared. Something like this arrangement lasted well into our own century, and it remains the dominant myth even today. The freedom of the artist was an internalization of the competitive freedom of the art market.

With the museum as consumer, a secondary market emerged for works regarded as of singular quality, usually works that had, as the expression goes, stood the test of time. Museums did not interact directly with the artist, whose death was the condition for his collectibility. They dealt with the dealer as indispensable middleman. Standing, as it were, outside history, the museum did not intervene in the process of creative production any more than the collector did. The artist was free to produce what he did produce, to experiment with his medium and his muse, always with the hope that someone would like it enough to buy it and that it might someday be enshrined in the sacred precincts of a museum. In those days going to the museum was like going to church: one was placed in the presence of the timeless.

Almost every component of this structure has now changed, though the freedom of the artist and the discrimination of the museum remain crucial myths. One reason for the change was the decision by museum people to be more responsive to the art of their own times; hence the museum show of contemporary art became an inevitable force in the market. Another reason has to do with the emergence of important collectors and important dealers who together took on the roles once played by church and court. Prices became too baronial not to affect artistic production. And beyond these reasons lies the not-so-hidden hand of the tax deduction for gifts to the museum which, to make a significant difference at the bottom line of the tax form, requires setting a high value for art works. Finally, I think, there is the profound historical fact that painting has been systematically revolutionized from within throughout the present century. Each season was expected to bring forth something new, and seasons themselves got shorter and shorter. The sharp dealer was the one who spotted the latest energies in artistic revolution and who could make the necessary connections with the collector, the museum and the agencies of publicity, assuring big bucks all around. There really was no place left for the small painting by the small artist. You had to paint to the market or do something else with your talent: teach, illustrate, decorate.

All this machinery was in place, the money was there, when the revolution suddenly ground to a halt in the early 1970s. It was as if all the possibilities had been exhausted, as though art had come to a kind of end. There is no reason, after all, that creativity of the sort historically expected should have gone on and on, and through the last decade a philosophy of pluralism overtook the art world. There was for the first time no particular direction, perhaps no possibility of a particular direction, though the demand that there be a direction remained intense. This was the artistic, spiritual and economic reality into which Schnabel crashed as *the* Hot Artist, and the jubilation of the art establishment has not abated yet. Everyone with any claim to power in the art world either has to get a piece of the action or must find his own Hot Artist. Such is the nature of the art world at present. On the artist's side there is an inevitable stridency as a certification of Hotness. On the consumer's side there is the hospitable checkbook, since the investment is secured by the almost instantaneous exaltation of Hot Artist as Modern Master, as gigantic objects move from chic gallery to chic loft to chic museum, where they become nightmares for the departments of preservation and restoration, required to deal with missing spruce roots and falling crockery.

There is a genuine talent in Schnabel's works, and an ingratiating, almost boyish charm. No doubt there are interesting biographical facts to be learned in order to explain this image or that. There are opportunities for ingenious interpretations. There may even be genuinely significant formal analyses to be given in the classroom, comparing Schnabel's crucifixion with, perhaps, that of Perugino. But all this pales, it seems to me, alongside the external significance of these works as fuel for the engines of the art market today, the laws and principles of which have scarcely been grasped even by those who control it. The one really interesting question for the future of art that arises from all this is, What will happen to the market when its principles are widely understood? □

THEATER.

PAUL BERMAN

Ma Rainey's Black Bottom

American culture contains only so many myths or stories of central importance, and one of those is surely the story of black music and its fate in the white world. Black musicians invent a certain style, demonstrate its brilliance and get clobbered for their efforts, is roughly how the story goes. You don't see it all that frequently in American literature, but on the stage it is a staple. Several versions have appeared on and off Broadway in the last year or two alone. There was the revival of Jerome Kern's *Showboat* from the 1920s, which uses the black music story as an important subtheme. There was the revival of Richard Rodgers's *On Your Toes* from the 1930s, in which white tap-dancers substitute for black musicians and all mention of race is expunged, permitting a happy ending; but the theme remains jazz versus prejudice. There is *Dreamgirls*, which tells the story from a black point of view, with a soul trio as its focus. An aspect of the story emerged in Charles Fuller's *A Soldier's Play* (now the movie *A Soldier's Story*), in which a blues musician in the Army is persecuted. And here it is one more time from a black point of view in *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* by August Wilson (at the Cort Theatre), with a blues band of the 1920s as the focus.

The appeal of the black music story is so obvious there's no point in spelling out its elements A to Z. But perhaps I'll go as far as D or E. The story has simplicity but also depth, which is why it qualifies as myth. It conjures a simple sympathy for the victims of bigotry, since musicians are by definition an inoffensive class, and if they are discriminated against, the injustice is undeniable. No explanation need be made about how these are well-behaved, decent musicians, as opposed to nasty, thuggish ones who deserve what they get. Then again, the story is not so simple and shows aspects of racial preju-

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dice that can be harder to detect than straight-out Jim Crow injustice. (Jim Crow, by the way, was a nineteenth-century black minstrel dancer, and I wonder if he didn't play a role in one of the earliest versions of the black music story.) The story is very good, for instance, at showing the sometimes subtle snobbism in American life—snobbism, that most insidious of prejudices—that makes people foolishly denigrate black music as crude and unserious. You see this in the all-white *On Your Toes*, where the partisans of classical ballet look down their noses at tap dance. Not that snobbism need always be white or especially upper class. A vicious black version is shown in *A Soldier's Play*, where the evil black sergeant despises back-country blues.

At a deeper level, the black music story shows bias and bigotry in a dialectical light, every oppression matched by some form of resistance—usually, resistance that is moral and esthetic. The musicians are victims, but they are not only victims. The world has pretty much come to agree by now that black music is one of the glories of American culture, and even a tin-ear musician is likely to reflect some of the collective triumph. Needless to say, the black music story doesn't bother with tin-ear musicians anyway. What it shows is black music blossoming magnificently before your eyes, and you come to feel that however downtrodden the musicians may be, they are better people with bigger souls and bigger talents than their oppressors. But it's true that the triumphal aspect of the story usually runs in a tragic vein. At perhaps its deepest level the story shows how the pressure of bigotry and the resulting sense of powerlessness among blacks produces the most awful violence, black against black, the violence that you see in *A Soldier's Play* or, more mildly, in *Dreamgirls*. And to mention one more trait, the story has an unusual quality among the great American myths: it is made for the stage.

Ma Rainey's Black Bottom offers a classic version of the black music story and does it from the moment the curtain goes up. The white owner of a record company ascends to his glass-enclosed control room and glowers at the studio floor below, where Ma Rainey and her band are going to cut a record. You notice immediately that here is a picture of how life appears to an ordinary black musician. The musician is down below actually making the music, and white society lurks above, isolated behind glass, controlling events for its own purposes. The four band members come in and spend their time warming up and hanging out in the rehearsal room, waiting for Ma to arrive so they can record. She does arrive, delays occur, they perform, tensions produce a climax—and in the course of these events, each level of the classic story takes shape upon the stage. We see the straight-out Jim Crow bigotry, mostly through long monologues by the band members, who recall things that happened long ago. We see the more subtle bias, the denigration of the music by the man who is prospering from it, the record company owner, who hopes to get into a line that's more "respectable" than issuing blues records. We see how casually and callously the musicians are exploited.

We also see—and this is the strongest, most theatrical part of the play—how the musicians resist by affirming their superiority over the white powers-that-be. Ma enters the studio dressed like the Queen of England, trailing her retinue of a nephew and a lesbian lover, in an obvious challenge to the authority of her dour white manager and the equally dour studio owner. She behaves outrageously. She holds up the session while someone fetches her a Coke. And for a moment—so carefully are Ma and her challenge presented—we're not sure how to judge her. Maybe the owner is right and she is an impossible, disrespectful fool. But then we remember that Ma is the Mother of the Blues, that she's a great artist, that she can do things the owner could never dream of doing. We remember that Ma has been the meat and potatoes of this record company. Or never mind remembering, she tells us. And why shouldn't she hold up the works while someone runs out to fetch her a Coke? It may be that her imperial authority doesn't extend very far in white society, and that not even Ma Rainey can hail a taxi in the streets of Chicago. So what? She's still the Mother of the Blues. And having watched all this, and listened to her sing, we also watch the last and most terrible level of the black music story unfold, and we see the toll that resistance of this sort takes on the black world.

Now, not everything in *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* is presented as well as one might wish. My colleague from *The Village Voice* Julius Novick has been rail-

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ing against the naturalist clichés in *Ma Rainey*, and he's got a point. The long monologues by the trumpet player introduce the traumas of his childhood, the action introduces the traumas of his adulthood, and no one will fail to guess that a violent explosion is on its way. It arrives—boom!—but it can't help sounding like bombast. The direction by Lloyd Richards and the set by Charles Henry McClennahan are no help in this regard. A nonnaturalist direction and set might have made the script clichés appear as conscious artifice. But the set and direction are eminently realistic, at least are meant to be, and the predictability comes off as unintentional.

The music is another problem. *Ma Rainey* has received a good deal of favorable publicity for its successful use of actors who aren't musicians (with the exception of Theresa Merritt, who can really sing). The whole play is designed to prevent the actors from having to perform more than an occasional note, and when the recording session finally begins, a rather well-done tape takes over and the actors merely pretend to play. But the few notes they offer in warming up fail to prepare us for that tape. The trumpet and trombone players have bad tones; they play tentatively. Yet the tape is smooth and professional. Nor do the actors behave like musicians. Real musicians love their "axes" and find it hard not to play them. But these stage musicans spend a couple of hours fingering their axes without much urge at all to tootle a few bars. The scene would be more convincing if the actors left their instruments alone instead of using them so promiscuously as props. In fact, the play would have been much better if it had been cast with actors who are also musicians, not an impossible combination, or if the band had been expanded to include a couple of real musicians. That way the play wouldn't be so frustrating to blues lovers who, when they see a blues band standing around with instruments in hand, want to hear, after all, the blues, and would prefer it live.

Too much is missing from *Ma Rainey* because the music is missing. We should feel that Ma and the band are great musicians not only because the playwright means us to feel this, and not only because they eventually do perform a first-rate blues number with the aid of tape and loudspeakers, but also because throughout the play this fact is evident, as it would be with real musicians. There is a subtheme, too, that might have been made more prominent. The trumpet player has turned against Ma's music, which he derides as jug-band stuff, and says he has developed a more modern style. A tiny hint of this style appears on the tape, and you are meant to feel that the trumpet player is on to something, perhaps that he's extremely talented. (The real Ma Rainey's trumpet player for some of her 1920s sessions was Louis Armstrong.) But even if he's not supposed to be a titan of jazz, you should feel in this trumpet player's pressure for innovation some of the dynamic of jazz development, the excitement of a musical genre being developed before your eyes. You should be able to see and not just deduce that Ma and her band figure in an important cultural movement, that these people aren't the humble offhand musicians you might take them for. But this is something the production can't deliver.

So *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* stumbles where it should fly. Still, it remains a better play than its flaws might lead you to think—better because the black music story is such a powerful one, and better because of the sharp ear and trusty instinct Wilson and Richards bring to black speech. There is a sweet slowness to the dialogue in *Ma Rainey* that is characteristic of a certain kind of Southern talk. Nothing clichéd about this aspect of the play, and as the dialogue circles around, now indulging a monologue, now bantering back and forth in the rehearsal room, you get the feeling that the play as a whole is a kind of blues song: relaxed, colloquial, deep, punctuated by solos, shaped by a pattern of theme, repetition and climax. The band (Charles S. Dutton, Joe Seneca, Leonard Jackson, Robert Judd) couldn't be better at evoking this feeling. John Carpenter and Lou Criscuolo are properly remote as the studio owner and Ma's manager, respectively. Theresa Merritt makes a magnificent Mother of the Blues. And since the play is the first by August Wilson to arrive in New York, one can say that it contains an additional element of suspense, a sort of suspended dominant chord at the end containing the question, What will his next play be like? □

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SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 2033

S	E	N	S	A	T	I	O	N	A	L	I	S	T	S
I		E		R		B		E		O		A		H
N	I	G	H	T	T	I	M	E		W	A	C	K	Y
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E				O		B		E		C		L		E
	A	M	A	T	E	U	R	S		A	M	E	E	R
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B	O	N	E	S		G	U	L	L	I	V	E	R	
E		N		C		E		Y		F				B
S	H	E	R	A	T	O	N		K	O	S	H	E	R
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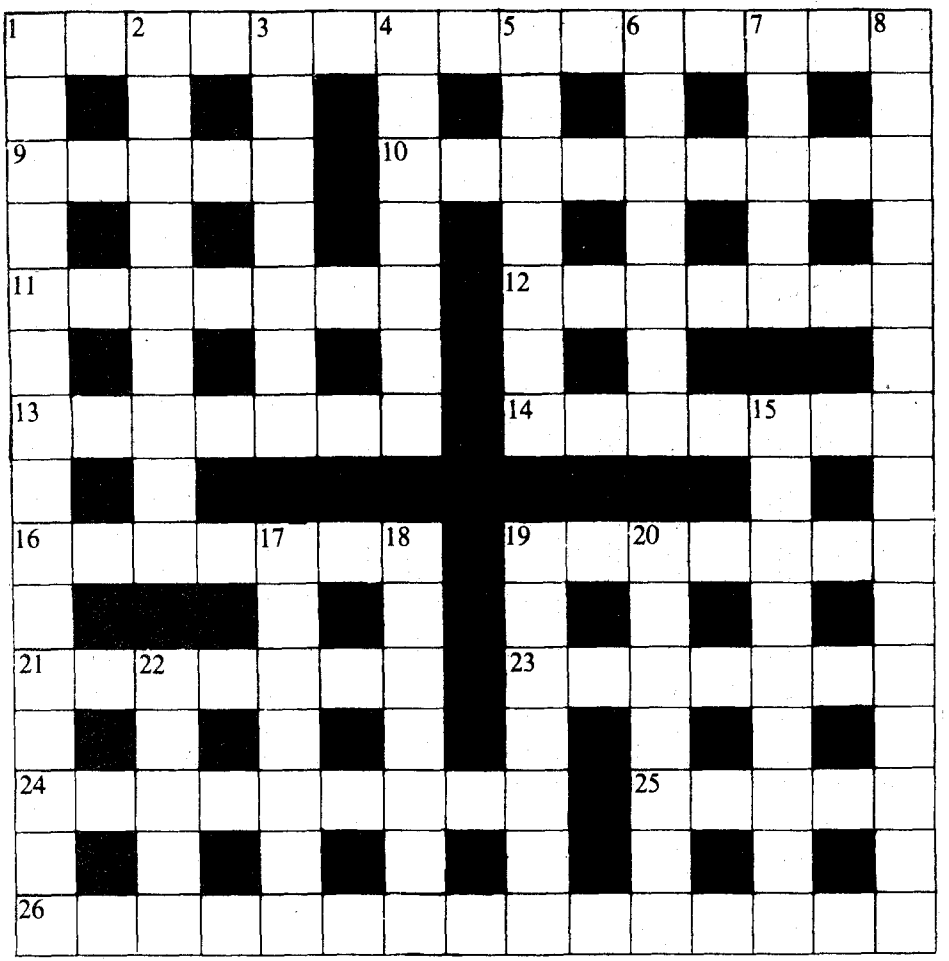
Crossword Puzzle No. 2034

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 Sounds like a Knight of the Bath in the old days. (Post time might have been suggested, too.) (8,7)
9 Take whatever you want! (5)
10 What the editor causes might be considered the work of a radical! (9)
11 It might be earlier for the younger to send forth one who comes out backwards. (7)
12 Make it to wear around the rain, snow, etc. (7)
13 Certainly they don't suggest a way out when attackers make them. (7)
14 Not really how the Customs official might regard your purchases, though one might be so obedient. (7)
16 Dug back when gone wrong at the end of it? It's certainly fishy! (7)
19 A French representation of animal, liquid and place for the tourists to see. (7)
21 A little animal always to leave around? (7)
23 Is one of these a necessary overhead for some Easterners? (7)
24 Are its counters rarely filled? (5,4)
25 One may not expect to find a wrecked canoe in it, however. (5)
26 Problem: What class is like a cliché for clean speed? (5,2,1,7)

DOWN

1 These imply a trip might be taken. (What's the point? It's superior to doing acrobatics on city squares!) (9,6)
2 At Balaclava the cannons did this after they volleyed, according to Tennyson. (You'll find it in both, under "Education.") (9)
3 Made by a sort of caliper that produces a copy. (7)
4 Evidently there's no tune—being somewhat stuffy. (7)
5 Wind up getting nothing paired, as some educational institutions are. (7)
6 What casters do for a spell. (7)
7 Pat a typical representative of them. (5)
8 Certainly not a private headache. (7,8)
15 Emancipate a common man—one might work for anybody! (4,5)
17 One of those things certain religious types wear? (The listener might need a key to it!) (7)
18 Let out after dinner, as the cons might have it? (7)
19 Perhaps a tool for Tom's father, by the sound of it. (4-3)
20 Certain evidence perhaps points to the wrong pair hanging around someplace in South America. (1,6)
22 In a way, drive the stage to carry his output. (5)

PUZZLED?

No more cross words. If you don't see why "Lures" are "Ground Rules," send for those of Mr. Lewis to *The Nation*, 72 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10011.

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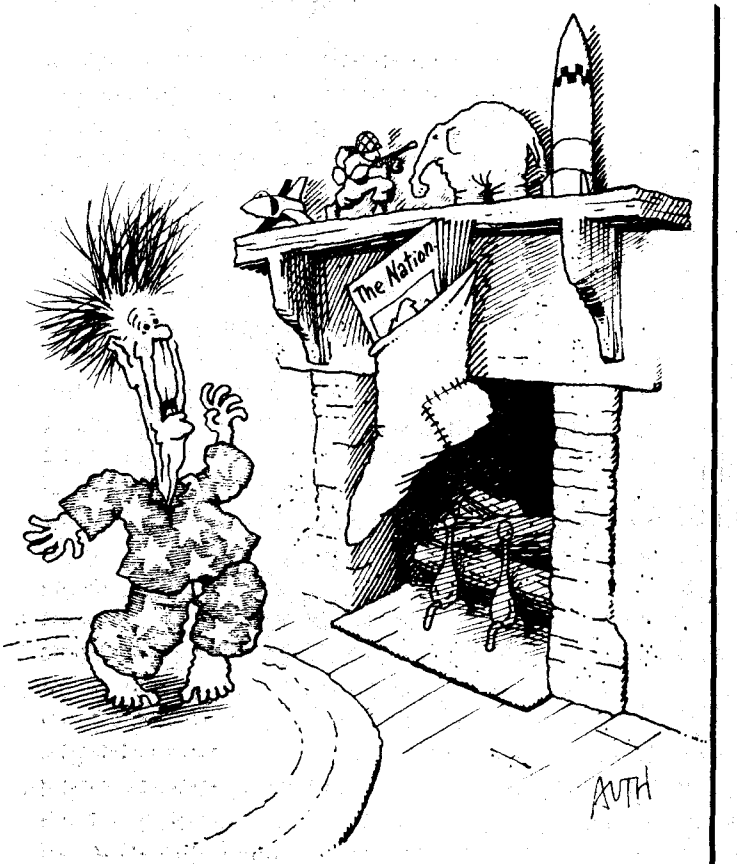

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